AN

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

CRITICAL STUDY AND KNOWLEDGE

OF THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES

VOL. I.

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HOLY SCRIPTURES.

BY

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ILLUSTRATED WITH MAPS AND FACSIMILES OF BIBLICAL MANUSCRIPTS.

FOURTEENTH EDITION.

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PREFACE.

THE Author of this Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures cannot offer a New Edition to the Public, without expressing his grateful acknowledgments of the very favourable reception given to it during the forty-two years which have elapsed since its first publication, in the year 1818.

This Work is designed as a comprehensive Manual of Sacred Literature, selected from the labours of the most eminent Biblical Critics, both British and Foreign. It originated in the Author's own wants, more than half a century since, at an early period of life, when he stood in need of a guide to the reading of the Holy Scriptures; which would not only furnish him with a general introduction to them, but would also enable him to solve apparent contradictions, and to study the Bible with that attention which its supreme importance demands. At that time he had no friend to assist his studies, or remove his doubts, nor any means of procuring critical works. At length a list of the more eminent Foreign Biblical Critics fell into his hands, and directed him to some of those sources of information which he was seeking. He then resolved to procure such of them as his very limited means would permit, with the design, in the first instance, of satisfying his own mind on those topics which had perplexed him, and ultimately of laying before the Public the result of his inquiries, should no treatise appear that might supersede such a publication.

The idea thus conceived was steadily kept in view for eighteen years; and the first edition of this Work appeared in the year 1818. During the long period which has elapsed since that date, every successive edition has been carefully

revised and corrected; and numerous additions have been made from time to time, conformably to the friendly suggestions of private correspondents, and of the Editors of the principal Critical Journals.

Representations having been made to the proprietors and publishers of this Work, that, since the publication of the ninth edition, very numerous accessions to Biblical Literature have been made on the Continent, which the Author's now far advanced years, and health impaired by sixty years of almost incessant literary toil, might render him unequal to examine and digest, the revision of the Second Volume has been confided to the Rev. John Ayre, M.A., who had previously evinced his competency for the undertaking by his learned and accurate researches in an important work which the publishers had entrusted to him.* The Fourth Volume has been confided to Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, LL.D.†, in consequence of the judgment formed of his

* In the tenth edition of the entire Work, published in 1856, the Second Volume was edited and nearly re-written by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Davidson, author of several established and learned works on Biblical Literature. On the appearance of that edition, while a high tribute was paid to Dr. Davidson's learning, some dissatisfaction was expressed, on the ground that his treatment of certain parts of that volume was not in harmony with the views of inspiration adopted in the other three volumes. The preparation of the Second Volume, therefore, was confided (as above stated) to the Rev. John Ayre, whose views are in complete accordance with those of the original author. In justice, however, to Dr. Davidson, it may be stated that his volume now forms a distinct treatise on "The Text of the Old Testament, with a Treatise on Sacred Interpretation," &c.; which is continued on sale, that those who approve of his views may purchase it as a portion of the new edition of this Work.

† Author of the "Book of Revelation in Greek, edited from Ancient Authorities, with a new English Version and Various Readings," 1844; "The Book of Revelation, translated from the ancient Greek Text," 1849; "Hebrew Reading Lessons," 1845; "Heads of Hebrew Grammar," 1852; "Remarks on the Prophetic Visions in the Book of Daniel," 1847; a new edition, revised and enlarged, 1852; "Defence of the Authenticity of the Book of Daniel," 1852; "The Jansenists: their Rise, Persecution by the Jesuits, and existing Remnant," 1851; "The Original Language of St. Matthew's Gospel," 1850; "Historic Evidence of the Authorship and Transmission of the Books of the New Testament," 1852; "An Account of the Printed Text of the Greek New Testament, with Remarks on its Revision upon Critical Principles," 1854; "The Greek New Testament, with Various Readings from Ancient Uncial MSS., &c.," 1857; "Fac-simile Edition of the Codex Zacynthius," 1860.

qualifications for the work, from his previously published Contributions to Biblical Literature. Their respective Prefaces contain a statement of what they have severally accomplished.

The Four Volumes, of which the Work now consists, will be found to comprise the following topics:—

VOLUME I. (by the Author) contains a CRITICAL INQUIRY INTO THE GENUINENESS, AUTHENTICITY, UNCORRUPTED PRESERVATION AND INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES; including, among other subjects, a copious investigation of Testimonies to the leading facts recorded in the Scriptures by Profane Authors, Coins, Medals, Inscriptions, and Ancient Structures. This is followed by a full view of the arguments afforded by Miracles and Prophecy for the Inspiration of the Scriptures, and by a discussion of the Internal Evidence for their Inspiration, furnished by the Sublimity and Excellence of the Doctrines, and by the Purity of the Moral Precepts, revealed in the Bible;—the Harmony subsisting between every part;—the Preservation of the Scriptures to the present time;—and their Tendency to promote the present and eternal happiness of mankind, as evinced by an Historical Review of the Beneficial Effects actually produced in every age and country by a cordial reception of the Bible; together with a refutation of the very numerous objections which have been urged against the Scriptures in recent infidel publications. An Appendix to this Volume comprises a particular examination of the Books commonly termed the Apocrypha, and of the Reasons for which they are rejected from the Canon of the divinely inspired Scriptures, by all the Reformed or Protestant Churches; and also a review of the Miracles of the Ascension of Jesus Christ, and the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, and of the Difficulties attendant on the Propagation of Christianity. These discussions are followed by a Table of the chief Prophecies relative to the Messiah, both in the Old and New Testaments, and by an examination of the Genuineness of Josephus's testimony con-

cerning Jesus Christ; together with an examination and refutation of the principal contradictions to Philosophy and the Nature of Things, and to Morality, which are falsely alleged to exist in the Scriptures.

In the first edition of this Work the Author had given only a very brief outline of the Evidences for the Genuineness and Inspiration of the Old Testament, and a more extended view of the Genuineness, Credibility and Inspiration of the New Testament; and, being unwilling to augment, unnecessarily, the number of treatises extant on these subjects, he referred his readers to a few which are justly accounted the most valuable. In preparing a second edition for the press, in the year 1820, it was his intention to condense these remarks, and to subjoin a few additional considerations: but he was induced to deviate from this design by the extensive circulation of infidel works and tracts, whose avowed object was, by the unblushing re-assertion of old and often-refuted objections, or by specious insinuations, to undermine and to subvert the religion of Jesus Christ — "the pillar of society, the safeguard of nations, the parent of social order, which alone has power to curb the fury of the passions, and secure to every one his rights; to the laborious the reward of their industry, to the rich the enjoyment of their wealth, to nobles the preservation of their honours, and to princes the stability of their thrones." Called upon by name from the press, to consider these objections to Divine revelation, the Author felt it his duty not to shrink from the task; and as the antagonists of the Scriptures have in some degree varied the grounds of their attacks, he indulges the hope that a temperate discussion of this subject, accommodated to the present times, may be not unacceptable to the Biblical Student, who may, at some future time, be exposed to meet with the enemies of the Scriptures. It may, perhaps, be thought that the gross and illiberal manner in which some of the productions in question have been executed, renders them unworthy of notice: but (as these infidel objections

continue to be reprinted and circulated) nothing surely is unworthy of notice that is calculated to mislead the ignorant or the unwary; and though some of the objections raised by the modern opposers of Divine Revelation are so coarse as to carry with them their own refutation, yet others are so concisely and speciously expressed, as to demand several pages,—the result of many days' laborious research, in order to detect their sophistry and falsehood. The Author has only to express his ardent hope, that this part of his labours may, through the Divine Blessing, enable his readers to be *ready* ALWAYS *to give an answer to* EVERY MAN *that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them* (1 Pet. iii. 15.); and he most earnestly requests that they will examine and combine, with candour and attention, the various evidences here adduced for the Genuineness, Authenticity, Credibility, and Divine Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures; and then solemnly and deliberately, as rational and accountable beings, deduce that inference from the whole, for which they must hereafter answer at the tribunal of the Almighty.

VOLUME II. (revised and edited by the Rev. John Ayre), is devoted to the CRITICISM of the OLD TESTAMENT and to SCRIPTURE INTERPRETATION generally, in Three Parts.

PART I., on the CRITICISM of the OLD TESTAMENT, includes Disquisitions on its Languages, especially the Hebrew Language; the History of the Sacred Text, both Manuscript and Printed; the Sources of Criticism, viz. Hebrew Manuscripts and Ancient Printed Editions, Ancient Versions, Parallel Passages, Quotations from the Old Testament in the New, Quotations made by Jewish Authors, and Critical Conjecture, with Rules for the application of the Sources of Sacred Criticism. These discussions are followed by a Table of the Quotations from the Old Testament in the New in three parallel columns, the Hebrew Text, the Septuagint Greek Version, and the Greek of the New Testament, with an English Version annexed to each, together with illustrative Observations on the External and Internal

Form of these Quotations. This Part concludes with a brief notice of Harmonies of Scripture.

PART II. treats on SCRIPTURE INTERPRETATION, in Two Books.

BOOK I., on the GENERAL PRINCIPLES of INTERPRETATION, discusses the Interpretation of Scripture Terms, comprising an investigation of the meaning of Words, and particular rules for ascertaining the Usus Loquendi; also the mode of ascertaining the Sense of Scripture by the consideration of the Subject-matter, the Context, Parallel Passages, the Scope, the Analogy of Faith, together with the Assistance to be derived from Jewish Writers, the Greek Fathers, and Historical and External Circumstances in the Interpretation of Scripture. The Extent of Inspiration is then examined, and some observations are made on Commentaries.

BOOK II., on the SPECIAL INTERPRETATION of SCRIPTURE, comprises the Interpretation of its figurative language, with a particular Examination of Tropes, Metonymies, Metaphors, Allegories, Parables, Proverbs, and various Figures of Speech; the Interpretation of the Poetical parts of Scripture; the Spiritual Interpretation, with a discussion on Types; the Interpretation of Scripture Prophecies; the Doctrinal and Moral Interpretation; the Interpretation and Means of Harmonising Passages which are alleged to be Contradictory; and the Inferential and Practical Reading of Scripture.

PART III. contains an INTRODUCTION to the several BOOKS of the OLD TESTAMENT, and the APOCRYPHA.

In VOLUME III. will be found a SUMMARY OF BIBLICAL GEOGRAPHY AND ANTIQUITIES (by the Author), in four Parts:—

PART I. includes an outline of the HISTORICAL and PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY of the HOLY LAND.

PART II. treats on the POLITICAL and MILITARY AFFAIRS of the JEWS, and other nations incidentally mentioned in the Scriptures.

PART III. discusses the SACRED ANTIQUITIES OF THE JEWS, arranged under the heads of Sacred Places, Sacred Persons, Sacred Times and Seasons, and the corruptions of Religion among the Jews, their Idolatry and various Sects, together with a Description of their Moral and Religious State in the time of Jesus Christ.

PART IV. discusses the DOMESTIC ANTIQUITIES, or the PRIVATE LIFE, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AMUSEMENTS, ETC., of the Jews, and other nations incidentally mentioned or alluded to in the Holy Scriptures.

An APPENDIX to this Third Volume contains (besides Chronological and other Tables, of Money, Weights, and Measures,) a concise Dictionary of the Symbolical Language of Scripture, to facilitate the reading of the Poetical and Prophetical Books; and a Biographical, Historical, and Geographical Dictionary of the most distinguished Persons, Nations, Countries, and Places mentioned in the Bible, especially in the New Testament; including an abstract of Profane Oriental History, from the time of Solomon to the Captivity, illustrative of the History of the Hebrews as referred to in the Prophetic Writings, and presenting Historical Notices of the Egyptian, Assyrian, Chaldee, Median, and Persian empires. In this Dictionary are incorporated References to the Principal Matters contained in the Third Volume; so as to render it, in fact, both a concise SYSTEM and a DICTIONARY OF BIBLICAL ANTIQUITIES.

In this Volume the Author has attempted only a sketch of Biblical Geography and Antiquities. To have written a complete treatise on this interesting subject,—as he conceives such a treatise should be written,—would have required a work nearly equal in extent to the present: but though he has been designedly brief in this part of his undertaking, he indulges the hope that few really essential points, connected with Sacred Antiquities, will appear to have been omitted.

VOLUME IV., in two Parts, is appropriated to THE LITERATURE AND ANALYSIS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

PART I. contains an introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament (by Dr. Tregelles); including the Characteristics of the New Testament Greek; the External Form, Divisions, Marks of Distinction, &c., of the Text of the New Testament; and Various Readings. These discussions are followed by a Systematic Classification of the Manuscript Documents, and by a review of the Theories of Recension of Manuscripts proposed by Griesbach, Hug, Scholz, and others;—an Examination of the Charge that certain Greek Manuscripts have been altered from the Latin;—an Account of the Velezian Readings;—a History of the Printed Text of the New Testament, from the early part of the sixteenth century to the present time;—Descriptions (illustrated with numerous Facsimiles) of the more ancient and more important Manuscripts of the New Testament, entire or in part, both in Uncial or Capital, and in Cursive or ordinary Greek characters. An Examination of the Ancient Versions of the New Testament, considered as sources of sacred criticism, next succeeds; which is followed by a Critical History of the Latin Versions in use before the Vulgate of Jerome, and of his revision of the Latin Vulgate, especially the Latin Vulgate now received as of paramount authority by the Church of Rome; of the several Syriac and other Oriental Versions, and the Gothic and other Ancient Versions in use in Europe. The early Citations made from the Books of the New Testament are next considered as sources of criticism; which are followed by a special examination (by the Author) of the evidence for and against the disputed clause in 1 John v. 7, 8. (which is now universally acknowledged to be spurious,) with a Bibliography of the Principal Treatises for and against its genuineness. This portion of the Work concludes with a critical review of the application of some of the results of textual criticism.

PART II. (by the Author and Dr. Tregelles) comprises copious Critical Prefaces to the several Books of the New Testament, and Synopses of their contents. In drawing up these synopses, the utmost attention has been given in order to present, as far as was practicable, at one glance, a comprehensive view of the subjects contained in each book. In executing this part of his work, the Author has endeavoured to steer between the extreme prolixity of some analysts of the Bible, and the too great brevity of others; and he ventures to hope, that this portion of his labours will be found particularly useful in studying the doctrinal parts of the New Testament. Throughout the Work references have been made to such approved writers as have best illustrated particular subjects.

An Appendix to the Fourth Volume (also by the Author and Dr. Tregelles) contains Bibliographical and Critical Notices of the principal Editions of the Old and New Testaments, Polyglot Bibles, Ancient Versions of the Scriptures, and the Apocryphal Books of the Old and New Testaments.

Such are the plan and object of the Work, once more submitted to the candour of the Public, in the hope that, with the Divine Blessing, it may continue to facilitate the Study of *the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto Salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus.* (2 Tim. iii. 15.) During the long period of sixty years that his best attention has been given to this work, the Author has prosecuted his labours under a deep sense of the responsibility attached to such an undertaking; and, though he dares not hope that he can altogether have avoided mistake, yet he can with truth declare that he has anxiously endeavoured not to mislead any one.

THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE.

November, 1860.

LET THE SWEET SAVOUR OF JEHOVAH OUR GOD BE UPON US,
AND THE WORK WE TAKE IN HAND DIRECT FOR US;
THE WORK WE TAKE IN HAND DO THOU DIRECT!

PSAL. XC. 17. BISHOP HORSLEY'S VERSION.

. . . . . .

IF I HAVE DONE WELL AND AS IS FITTING THE STORY, IT IS THAT WHICH I DESIRED; BUT IF SLENDERLY AND MEANLY, IT IS THAT WHICH I COULD ATTAIN UNTO.

2 MACCABEES XV. 38.

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INTRODUCTION

TO

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

ON THE GENUINENESS, AUTHENTICITY, INSPIRATION, ETC. OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE POSSIBILITY, PROBABILITY, AND NECESSITY OF A DIVINE REVELATION.

THAT there now is, and that for more than three thousand years there has been, in the world, a separate people called the JEWS, who are distinguished by peculiar customs, and profess a peculiar religion: — Further, that there now is, and that for more than eighteen centuries there has existed, in the world, a religion called the CHRISTIAN; and that its professors, as well as the Jews, appeal to certain books, by them accounted sacred, as the basis on which their religion is founded: — These are FACTS which no one can controvert.

I. The volume, to which Jews and Christians thus respectively appeal, is termed the BIBLE, that is, THE BOOK, by way of eminence. It comprises a great number of different narratives and compositions, written by several persons, at distant periods, in different languages, and on various subjects. Yet all of these, collectively, claim to be a DIVINE REVELATION, that is, a discovery afforded by God to man of Himself or of His will, over and above what He has made known by the light of nature, or the power of human reason.

The objects of our knowledge are of three kinds: — Thus, some things are discernible by the light of nature, without revelation: of this kind is the knowledge of God from the creation of the world, "for his invisible things, even his eternal power and godhead, since the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." Other things are of pure and simple revelation, which cannot be known by the light of nature: such is the doctrine of the salvation of the world by Jesus Christ. Others, again, are discoverable by the light of nature, but imperfectly, and therefore stand in need of a revelation to give them further proof and evidence:

of this sort are a future state and eternal rewards and punishments. But of what degree soever the revelation may be, whether partial or entire, whether a total discovery of some unknown truths, or only a fuller and clearer manifestation of them, it must be supernatural, and proceed from God.

II. Possibility of a Divine Revelation.

No one, who believes that there is a God, and that He is a Being of infinite power, wisdom, and knowledge, can reasonably deny, that He can, if He thinks fit, make a revelation of himself and of his will to men, in an extraordinary way, different from the discoveries made by men themselves, in the mere natural and ordinary use of their own rational faculties and powers. For if the power of God be almighty, it must extend to whatever does not imply a contradiction, which cannot be pretended in this case. We cannot distinctly explain the origin of our ideas, or the way in which they are excited or impressed upon the human mind; but we know that these ways are very various. And can it be supposed that the author of our being has it not in his power to communicate ideas to our minds, for informing and instructing us in those things which we are deeply concerned to know? Our inability clearly to explain the manner in which this is done is no just objection against it.[1]

And as it cannot reasonably be denied that God can, if he sees fit, communicate his will to men in a way of extraordinary revelation, so he can do it in such a manner as to give those, to whom this revelation is originally and immediately made, a full and certain assurance that it is a true divine revelation. This is a natural consequence; for, to suppose that God can communicate his will in a way of extraordinary revelation, and yet that he is not able to give a sufficient assurance to the person or persons to whom he thus reveals his will, is evidently absurd and contradictory. It is, in effect, to say, that he can reveal his will, but has no way of making men know that he does so; which is a most unreasonable limitation of the divine power and wisdom. He, who pretends to pronounce that this is impossible, is bound to pronounce where the impossibility of it lies. If men can communicate their thoughts by speech or language in such a way as that we may certainly know who it is that speaks to us, it would be a strange thing to affirm that God, on supposition of his communicating his mind and will to any person or persons in a way of extraordinary revelation, has no way of causing his rational creatures to know that it is He, and no other, who makes this discovery to them. To admit the existence of a God, and to deny him such a power, is a glaring contradiction.[2]

III. Since then it cannot reasonably be denied that it is *possible*

[1] This has been acknowledged by a distinguished antagonist of revelation; who observes, that "an extraordinary action of God upon the human mind, which the word inspiration is now used to denote, is not more inconceivable than the ordinary action of mind on body, or body on mind;" and "that it is impertinent to deny the existence of any phenomenon, merely because we cannot account for it." Lord Bolingbroke's Works, vol. ii. p. 468. 4to. edit.

[2] Leland's Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, vol. i. pp. 13—15. (8vo. edit.) Glasgow, 1819.

for God to reveal his will to mankind, let us in the next place consider the PROBABILITY of such a revelation.

1. If any credit be due to the general sense of mankind in every age, we shall scarcely find one that believed the existence of a God, who did not likewise believe that some kind of commerce and communication subsisted between God and man. This was the foundation of all the religious rites and ceremonies, which every nation pretended to receive from their deities. Hence also the most celebrated legislators of antiquity, — as Zoroaster, Minos, Pythagoras, Solon, Lycurgus, Numa, &c. &c. all thought it necessary to profess some intercourse with heaven, in order to give the greater sanction to their laws and institutions, notwithstanding many of them were armed with secular power.[1] And what gave birth and so much importance to the oracles, divinations, and auguries, in ancient times, was the conscious sense entertained by mankind of their own *ignorance*, and of their *need* of a supernatural illumination; as well as the persuasion, that their gods held a perpetual intercourse with men, and by various means gave them intelligence of future things.

2. The probability of a divine revelation further appears from this circumstance, that some of the wisest philosophers, particularly Socrates and Plato, confessed that they stood in need of such a revelation to instruct them in matters which were of the utmost consequence. With regard to the state of morals, they acknowledged that, as the state of the world then was, there were no human means of reforming it. But they not only saw and acknowledged their great want of a divine revelation to instruct them in their conduct towards God and towards man; they likewise expressed a strong hope or expectation, that God would, at some future time, make such a discovery as should dispel the cloud of darkness in which they were involved.[2]

IV. From the preceding remarks and considerations, we are authorised to infer, that a divine revelation is not only probable, but also absolutely NECESSARY.

1. In fact, without such revelation, the history of past ages has shown that mere human reason *cannot* attain to any *certain* knowledge of the will or law of God, of the true happiness of man, or of a future state. To a reflecting and observant mind, the harmony, beauty, and wisdom of all the varied works of creation are demonstrative evidence of a First Great Cause; and the continued preservation of all things in their order attests a divine and superintending Providence. But the *ultimate* design of God in all his works cannot be perfectly known by the mere light of nature, and consequently our

[1] This fact is remarkably confirmed by the celebrated heathen geographer Strabo, whose observation on the supposed intercourse between mankind and the Deity is too striking to be omitted: "Whatever," says he, "becomes of the real truth of these relations, this however is certain, that *men* DID BELIEVE *and think them true*: and, for this reason, prophets were held in such honour, as to be thought worthy sometimes of royal dignity, as being persons who delivered precepts and admonitions from the gods, both while they lived, and also after their death. Such were Tiresias, Amphiaraus, &c. &c. Such *were Moses and his successors*." Strab. Geogr. lib. xvi. pp. 1084, 1085. ed. Oxon.

[2] Plato, de Rep. lib. iv. and vi. and Alcibiad. ii. Dr. Samuel Clarke has exhibited these and other testimonies at length in his discourse on the Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion, proposition vi. (Boyle Lectures, vol. ii. pp. 130—135. folio edit.)

knowledge of his preceptive will or law is equally uncertain, so far as his works disclose it or philosophy has discovered it.[1] Indeed, if we examine the writings of the most celebrated ancient philosophers, we shall find that they were not only ignorant of many important points in religion which revelation has discovered to us, but also that endless differences and inconsistencies prevailed among them in points of the greatest moment; while some of them taught doctrines which directly tend to promote vice and wickedness in the world; and the influence of all, in rectifying the notions and reforming the lives of mankind, was inconsiderable. A concise statement of facts will confirm and illustrate this observation:

(1.) The ideas of the ancients respecting the nature and worship of God were dark, confused, and imperfect.

While some philosophers asserted the being of a God, others openly denied it; others, again, embraced, or pretended to embrace, the notion of a multiplicity of gods, celestial, aërial, terrestrial, and infernal; while others represented the Deity as a corporeal being united to matter by a necessary connection, and subject to an immutable fate. As every country had its peculiar deities, the philosophers (whatever might be their private sentiments) sanctioned and defended the religion of the state; and urged a conformity to it to be the duty of every citizen. They "diligently practised the ceremonies of their fathers; devoutly frequented the temples of the gods; and sometimes, condescending to act a part on the theatre of superstition, they concealed the sentiments of an atheist under the sacerdotal robes."[2] It is true that insulated passages may be found in the writings of *some* of the philosophers, which *apparently* indicate the most exalted conceptions of the divine attributes and perfections. These and similar passages are sometimes regarded with a Christian eye, and thence acquire a borrowed sanctity: but, in order to discover their real value, they must be brought to their own standard, and must be interpreted upon principles *strictly pagan*, in which case the context will be found either to claim such perfections for the deified mortals and heroes of the popular theology, or to connect them with some of those physiological principles which were held by the different philosophical sects, and effectually subverted the great and fundamental doctrine of one supreme Creator.[3] The religion of thé

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[1] On this subject the reader may peruse, with equal pleasure and instruction, Dr. Ellis's elaborate treatise on the "Knowledge of Divine Things from Revelation, not from Reason or Nature," published many years since at Dublin, and reprinted at London in 1811. 8vo. Dr. E. also threw the substance of this treatise into a single discourse, which may be substituted for the preceding by those who may not be able to command the requisite leisure for reading a large volume. The discourse in question is printed in the first volume of the well-known and excellent collection of tracts intitled "The Scholar armed against the Errors of the Time;" and is intitled "An Euquiry, whence cometh Wisdom and Understanding to Man?" It shows satisfactorily, that Religion and language entered the world by divine revelation, without the aid of which man had not been a rational or religious creature; that nothing can oblige the conscience but the revealed will of God; and that such a thing as the law of nature never existed but in the human imagination. The same argument is also discussed in an able but anonymous tract (now of rare occurrence, and known to be written by the Rev. Dr. James Paton, a divine of the Scottish church), intitled "An Attempt to show that the Knowledge of God has, in all Ages, been derived from Revelation or Tradition, not from Nature." Glasgow, 1773. 8vo.

[2] Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. i. p. 50.

[3] Dr. Ireland, Paganism and Christianity compared, pp. 46, 47. Franks's Essay on the Use and Necessity of Revelation, p. 44. "These ideas of the philosophers of Europe," says Dr. Robertson, "were precisely the same which the Brahmins had adopted in India, and according to which they regulated their conduct with respect to the great body of the people. Wherever the dominion of false religion is completely established, the body of the people gain nothing by the greatest improvements in knowledge. Their philosophers conceal from them, with the utmost solicitude, the truths which they have discovered, and labour to support that fabric of superstition which it was their duty to have overturned." Historical Disquisition concerning Ancient India, pp. 283 284

ancient Persians is said to have been originally founded on their belief in one supreme God, who made and governs the world.[1] But a devotion founded on a principle so pure as this, if it survived the first ages after the flood, which cannot be proved, is known with certainty to have been early exchanged for the Sabian idolatry; the blind and superstitious worship of the host of heaven, of the sun, the planets, and the fire[2], the water, the earth, and the winds.

In consequence of these discordant sentiments, the grossest polytheism and idolatry prevailed among the ancient heathen nations. They believed in the existence of many co-ordinate deities, and the number of inferior deities was infinite[3]: they deified dead, and sometimes living, persons; the former often out of injudicious gratitude, the latter usually out of base and sordid flattery. According to the vulgar estimation, there were deities that presided over every distinct nation, every distinct city, every inconsiderable town, every grove, every river, every fountain. Athens was full of statues dedicated to different deities. Imperial Rome, from political principles, adopted all the gods which were adored by the nations who had yielded to her victorious arms, and thought to eternise her empire by crowding them all into the capital. Temples and fanes were erected to all the *passions*, *diseases*, *fears*, and *evils*, to which mankind are subject. Suited to the various characters of the divinities were the rites of their worship. Some were vindictive and sanguinary; others were jealous, wrathful, or deceivers; and all of them were unchaste, adulterous, or incestuous. Not a few of them were monsters of the grossest vice and wickedness: and their rites were absurd, licentious, and cruel, and often consisted of mere unmixed crime, shameless dissipation, and debauchery. Prostitution, in all its deformity, was systematically annexed to various pagan temples, was often a principal source of their revenues, and was, in some countries, even compulsory upon the female population. Other impurities were solemnly practised by them in their temples, and in public, from the very thought of which our minds revolt. Besides the numbers of men who were killed in the bloody sports and spectacles instituted in honour of their deities, human sacrifices were offered to propitiate them.[4] Boys were whipped on the altar of Diana, sometimes till they

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[1] Asiat. Researches, vol. ii. p. 58.

[2] Leland's Advant. and Necessity of the Christ. Rev. vol. i. pp. 59. 79.

[3] Thus, the *Chaldeans* had twelve principal deities, according to the number of months in the year; and Zoroaster, the great Persian reformer, taught the Medians and Persians that there were two spirits or beings subordinate to one supreme, eternal, and self-existent being, viz. Oromasdes, the angel of light and promoter of happiness and virtue, and Arimanes, the angel of darkness and author of misery and vice.— Varro makes three sorts of *heathen* theology;— the *fabulous*, invented by the poets;— the *physical*, or that of the philosophers; and *civil* or popular, which last was instituted in the several cities and countries.— The Greek theology was thus distinguished:— 1. God, who rules over all things;— 2. The gods, who were supposed to govern above the moon;— 3. The demons, whose jurisdiction was in the air below it;— and, 4. The heroes, or souls of dead men, who were imagined to preside over terrestrial affairs. And, besides all these, the evil demons were worshipped, from fear of the mischief they might commit. These facts will account for the prodigious multitude of heathen deities, of which Hesiod computes thirty thousand to be hovering about the earth in the air, unless he is to be understood as meaning an indefinite number.— Orpheus reckoned only *three hundred and sixty-five;* Varro enumerated *three hundred* Jupiters; although he himself, together with Cicero, Seneca, and some other eminent philosophers, were ashamed of the heathen deities, and believed that there is but one God.

[4] The chief oracles among the heathens appointed human sacrifices: as that at Delphi, that of Dodona, and that of Jupiter Saotes. It was a custom among the Phœnicians and Canaanites, in times of great calamity, for their kings to sacrifice one of their sons, whom they loved best; and it was common both with them, as well as with the Moabites and Ammonites, to sacrifice their children. Further, the Egyptians, the Athenians, and Lacedemonians, and, generally speaking, all the Greeks;— the Romans, Carthaginians, Germans, Gauls, and Britons;— in short, all the heathen nations throughout the world offered human sacrifices upon their altars; and this, not on certain emergencies and imminent dangers only, but constantly, and in some places every day. Upon extraordinary accidents, *multitudes* were sacrificed at once to their sanguinary deities. Thus, during the battle between the Sicilian army under Gelon and the Carthaginians under Amilcar, in Sicily, the latter remained in his camp, offering sacrifices to the deities of his country, and consuming upon one large pile the bodies of numerous victims. (Herod. lib. vii. c. 167.) When Agathocles was about to besiege Carthage, its inhabitants, seeing the extremity to

died. How many lovely infants did the Carthaginians sacrifice to their implacable god Moloch! What numbers of human victims, in times of public danger, did they immolate, to appease the resentment of the offended deities!

It has been said that the mysteries were designed to instruct the people in the principles of true religion and of true morality; and ingenious and learned men have laboured to represent them in this light, and also to show how well calculated they are for this end. "They have said, that the errors of polytheism were detected and exposed, and the doctrines of the divine unity [1] and supreme government taught and explained in them; that the initiated became bound by solemn engagements to reform their lives, and to devote themselves strictly to the practice and cultivation of purity and virtue; and that the celebration of the mysteries was extensive; and their influence great:—'*initiantur*,' says Cicero, '*gentes orarum ultimæ*.'

"It is true, that the priests of the mysteries were highly ostentatious of their own morality, and zealous in their professions to regenerate the people. But the means which they employed were neither suitable nor adequate to that end; nor did they answer it. The mysteries, which, it has been pretended, were calculated to produce it, served only, in fact, to explain some of the subjects of mythology, and to promote the designs of human policy—to inspire heroism, and to secure civil subordination and obedience. In proof of this we may ask, if they contributed at all to change the people's polytheistical opinions, or to improve their morals? Did they not, in place of becoming better by them, degenerate daily? were they not oppressed more and more by superstition, and dissol ed in vice? Did not some of the best and wisest philosophers disapprove of the mysteries? Alcibiades mocked the gods—Anaxagoras was expelled by the Athenians for the neglect of them. Socrates certainly had no good opinion of the mysteries—he was not initiated into them; and circumstances attending them have been suggested which ought to render their moral tendency more than suspicious.

"They were celebrated in the silence and darkness of the night, with the utmost secrecy. They were frequently conducted under the patronage of the most licentious and sensual deities. The most indecent objects were exhibited, and carried in procession. 'It is a shame,' saith the Apostle, 'even to speak of those things which were done of them in secret.' At last they became so infamous, in respect both of morality and good order, that it was found necessary to prohibit them.

"It is hard to conceive how the mysteries could have any good effect on the morals of the people. It might excite the ambition of a few, to be told that the gods were nothing more than eminent men; but it was more likely to disgust the greater part of them, and to render them completely unbelieving and irreligious. Besides, considering how few were initiated, the influence of the mysteries, even supposing them to have had a beneficial influence, must have been very small on the

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which they were reduced, imputed all their misfortunes to the anger of Saturn; because, instead of offering up children of noble descent (who were usually sacrificed), there had been fraudulently substituted for them the children of slaves and foreigners. Two hundred children of the best families in Carthage were therefore immolated, to propitiate the offended divinity; to whom upwards of three hundred citizens voluntarily sacrificed themselves, from a sense of their guilt of this pretended crime. (Diod. Sic. lib. xx. c. 14.) On another occasion, the Carthaginians having obtained a victory, immolated the handsomest of their captives, the flame of whose funeral pile was so great as to set their camp on fire. (Ib. lib. xx. c. 65.) Lactantius (Divin. Instit. lib. i. c. 21.) has recorded numerous similar horrid sacrifices of human victims. Besides the preceding authorities, the reader will find numerous additional testimonies, drawn from classic authors, in Dr. Harwood's Introduction to the New Testament, vol. i. pp. 111—116.; Mr. Bryant's Analysis of Ancient Mythology, vol. ii. pp. 224. 266. 312.; and also in Dr. Leland's Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, vol. i. ch. 7. pp. 134—157.

[1] Dr. Hill (Essays on the Institutions, &c. of Ancient Greece, p. 52.) is of opinion, after many eminent writers, that the doctrine of the unity of God was taught in the mysteries. See also Bp. Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses, book ii. sect. 4. But Dr. Leland has long since examined the various proofs adduced in support of this sentiment; and has shown that there is great reason to think that the notion of the Deity taught in the mysteries was *not* a right and just one; and even if it were so, that it would have been of little use, as it was communicated only to a few, and under the strictest seal of secrecy. Advant. and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, vol. i. pp. 158—196.

mass of the people. Farther, the initiated were prohibited, under a solemn oath, ever to reveal the mysteries. Whatever benefit, therefore, they might themselves derive from them, they could communicate none to others; nor could the impression, however strong during the initiation, be always retained with equal strength during life. On the whole, taking the account even of those who favour them, the mysteries neither diminished the influence of polytheism nor promoted the belief of the divine unity;—they contributed rather to the increase of superstition, and to the prevalence of licentiousness and vice. If they were designed, as has been affirmed, to show that the public religion had no foundation in truth—to hold it up to contempt—what could have a worse effect on the mind of the people? what more injurious to religious and moral principles and practice, than to exhibit the whole civil and ecclesiastical constitution as a trick and imposition—as reared by falsehood and maintained by hypocrisy?"[1]

But whatever motives may have induced the first inventors of mysteries to introduce them, the fact is, that they neither did nor could correct the polytheistic notions or the morals of the people, and in the course of time they became greatly corrupted; consequently they could not but have a bad effect on the people, and tend to confirm them in their idolatrous practices. All men, indeed, under pain of displeasing the gods, frequented the temples and offered sacrifices; but the priests made it not their business to teach them virtue. So long as the people were punctual in their attendance on the religious ceremonies of their country, the priests assured them that the gods were propitious, and they looked no farther. "Lustrations and processions were much easier than a steady course of virtue; and an expiatory sacrifice, which atoned for the want of it, was much more convenient than a holy life." Those who were diligent in the observance of the sacred customary rites were considered as having fulfilled the duties of religion; but no farther regard was had to their morals, than as the state was concerned. It cannot therefore excite surprise, that the polytheistical religion was every where preferred to virtue; and that a contrary course of thinking and acting proved fatal to the individual who professed it.

(2.) They were ignorant of the true account of the creation of the world.

The notion of a Creative Power, that could produce things out of nothing, was above the reach of their natural conceptions. Hence one sect of philosophers[2] held that the world was eternal; another[3], that it was formed in its present admirable order by a fortuitous concourse of innumerable atoms; and another[4], that it was made by chance; while those who believed it to have a beginning in time, knew not by what gradations, nor in what manner, the universe was raised into its present beauty and order.

(3.) They were also ignorant of the origin of evil, and the cause of the depravity and misery which actually exist among mankind.

The more judicious heathens saw and lamented the universal tendency of men to commit wickedness; but they were ignorant of its true source. They acknowledged, generally, that the chief good of man consisted in the practice of virtue; but they complained of an irregular sway in the wills of men, which rendered their precepts of little use: and they could not assign any reason why mankind, who have the noblest faculties of any beings upon earth, should yet generally pursue their destruction with as much industry as the beasts avoid it.

(4.) Equally ignorant were the heathens of any means, ordained and established by the Almighty, by which a reconciliation could be effected between God and man, and His mercy exercised, without the violation of His justice; and by which the pardon of sinners might not only be made consistent with the wisdom of His government, and the honour of His laws, but also the strongest assurances might be given them of pardon, and restoration to the divine favour.

[1] Dr. Ranken's Institutes of Theology, pp. 180, 181. Glasgow, 1822. 8vo.
[2] The Peripatetics. [3] Democritus and his followers. [4] The Epicureans.

"Man is not only a subject of the divine government, and therefore in the highest degree concerned to know the divine law, that he may obey it; but he is also a rebel subject, and therefore in the highest degree concerned to discover the means of restoration to the favour of God. Man has violated such precepts of the divine law as are discovered and acknowledged either by reason or revelation;—such precepts, for instance, as require him to be thankful to his Maker, and sincere, just, and kind to his fellow-man. These things may be considered here as known to be parts of the law of God; because those philosophers who acknowledge God, generally agree that these are, plainly, duties of man. But all men have violated the precepts which require these things. The first interest of all men is, therefore, to obtain a knowledge of the means, if there be any, of reconciliation to God, and re-instatement in the character and privileges of faithful subjects. To be thus reconciled and reinstated, men must be pardoned; and pardon is an act of mere mercy. But of the mercy of God there are no proofs in his Providence."[1] The light of nature, indeed, showed their guilt to the most reflecting of the ancient philosophers; but it could not show them a remedy. From the consideration of the divine goodness, as displayed in the works of creation, some of them indulged the hope that the Almighty *might*, in some way or other (though to them inscrutable), be reconciled; but, in what manner, revelation only could inform them. That God will receive returning sinners, and accept repentance instead of perfect obedience; and that He will not require something further for the vindication of his justice, and of the honour and dignity of his laws and government, and for more effectually expressing his indignation against sin, before He will restore men to their forfeited privileges,—they could not be assured. For it cannot be positively proved from any of the divine attributes, that God is absolutely obliged to pardon all creatures all their sins, at all times, barely and immediately upon their repenting. There arises, therefore, from nature, no sufficient comfort to sinners, but, on the contrary, anxious and endless solicitude about the means of appeasing the Deity. Hence the various ways of sacrificing, and numberless superstitions, which overspread the heathen world, were so little satisfactory to the wiser part of mankind, even in those times of darkness, that the more reflecting philosophers could not forbear frequently declaring[2] that they thought those rites could avail little or nothing towards appeasing the wrath of a provoked God, but that something was wanting, though they knew not what.

(5.) They were ignorant, at least they taught nothing, of divine grace and assistance towards our attainment of virtue, and perseverance in it.

Some of their philosophers forbad men to pray to the gods to make them good[3], which, they said, they ought to do themselves; while others equalled themselves to the gods[4]; for these, they affirmed, "are what they are by nature; the wise man is what he is by his own industry."[5]—"The gods excel not a wise man in happiness, though they excel him in the duration of happiness."[6]

(6.) They had only dark and confused notions of the *summum bonum* or supreme felicity of man.

On this topic, indeed, Cicero informs us, that there was so great a dissension among the philosophers, that it was almost impossible to enumerate their different sentiments. At the same time he states the opinions of more than twenty philosophers, all of which are equally extravagant and absurd.[7] Not to enter into unnecessary details, we may remark that, while one sect[8] affirmed that virtue was the sole good, and its own reward, another[9] rejected that notion in the case of virtue in distress, and made the good things of this life a necessary ingredient of happiness;

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[1] Dr. Dwight's Two Discourses on the Nature and Danger of Infidel Philosophy, p. 16.
[2] See particularly Plato's Alcibiades, ii. throughout.
[3] The Stoics. See Seneca, epist. 31. (op. tom. iii. p. 99. ed. Bipont.)
[4] Ibid. ep. 92. (tom. iii. p. 386.)
[5] Ibid. ep. 53. (tom. iii. p. 155.)
[6] Ibid. ep. 73. (tom. iii. p. 242.)
[7] According to Varro, there were nearly *three hundred* opinions concerning the chief good. Augustin. de Civit. Dei. lib. xix. c. 1.
[8] The Stoics.
[9] The Peripatetics.

and a third[1] set up pleasure, or at least indolence and freedom from pain, as the final good which men ought to propose to themselves. On these discordant opinions, Cicero very justly remarks, that they who do not agree in stating what is the *chief end or good*, must of course differ in the *whole system* of precepts for the conduct of life.[2]

(7.) They had weak and imperfect notions of the immortality of the soul, which was absolutely denied by many philosophers as a vulgar error, while others represented it as altogether uncertain, and as having no solid foundation for its support.

Concerning the nature of the human soul, various and most contradictory sentiments prevailed. Its existence after death was denied by many of the Peripatetics, or followers of Aristotle, and this seems to have been that philosopher's own opinion. On this important topic the Stoics had no settled or consistent scheme; the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was not a professed tenet of their school, nor was it ever reckoned among the avowed principles of the Stoic sect. And even among those philosophers who expressly taught this doctrine, considerable doubt and uncertainty appear to have prevailed. Thus Socrates, shortly before his death, tells his friends, "I hope I am now going to good men, though this I would not take upon me peremptorily to assert; but, that I shall go to the gods, lords that are absolutely good, this, if I can affirm any thing of this kind, I would certainly affirm. And for this reason I do not take it ill that I am to die, as otherwise I should do; but I am in good hope that there is something remaining for those who are dead, and that it will then be much better for good than for bad men."[3] The same philosopher afterwards expressed himself still more doubtfully, and said, that though he should be mistaken, he did at least gain thus much, that the expectation of it made him less uneasy while he lived, and his error would die with him; and he concludes in the following terms: — "I am going out of the world, and you are to continue in it; but which of us has the better part, is a secret to every one but God."[4]

What has been said of Socrates may in a great measure be applied to Plato, the most eminent of his disciples; but they greatly weakened and obscured their doctrine relative to the immortality of the soul, by blending with it that of the transmigration of souls and other fictions, as well as by sometimes expressing themselves in a very wavering and uncertain manner concerning it. And it is remarkable that, though there were several sects of philosophers, who professed to derive their original from Socrates, scarcely any of them taught the immortality of the soul as the doctrine of their schools, except Plato and his disciples; and many of these treated it as absolutely uncertain.

Cicero is justly considered as among the most eminent of those philosophers who argued for the immortality of the soul; yet he laboured under the same uncertainty that distressed their minds. Though he has treated the subject at considerable length, and has brought forward a variety of cogent arguments in behalf of this doctrine; yet, after he has spoken of the several opinions concerning the nature and duration of the soul, he says, "Which of these is true, God alone knows; and which is most probable, a very great question."[5] And he introduces one complaining, that, while he was reading the arguments for the immortality of the soul, he thought himself convinced; but, as soon as he laid aside the book and began to reason with himself, his conviction was gone. All which gave Seneca just occasion to say, that "Immortality, however desirable, was rather *promised* than *proved* by those great men."[6] While the followers of these great philosophers were thus perplexed with doubts, others of the heathen entertained the most gloomy notions, — imagining either that they should be removed from one body to another and be perpetual wanderers, or contemplating the grave as their eternal habitation[7], and sadly com-

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[1] The Epicureans. [2] Cicero, Acad. Quest. lib. i. in fine.

[3] Plato, Phædon. (op. tom. i. p. 143. ed. Bipont.)

[4] Apol. Socratis, in fine (op. tom. i. p. 96.).

[5] Cicero, Tusc. Quæst. lib. i. [6] Seneca, ep. 102. See also ep. 117.

[7] It is called *Domus Aeterna* in many inscriptions. Gruter, Corpus Inscriptionum, p. dcclx. 5. dccxc. 5. dccccxiii. 6, &c. Jortin's Discourses concerning the Christian Religion, p. 293.

plaining that the sun and stars could set and rise again, but that man, when his day was set, must lie down in darkness, and sleep a perpetual sleep.[1]

(8.) If the philosophers were thus uncertain concerning the immortality of the soul, their ideas were equally confused respecting the certainty of the eternal rewards and punishments of a future state, and of the resurrection of the body.

For, though the poets had prettily fancied, and have pourtrayed in beautiful and glowing verse, the joys of elysium, or a place and state of bliss, and the miseries of tartarus, or hell; and though the ancient philosophers and legislators were sensible of the importance to society and also of the necessity of the doctrine of future punishments, yet they generally discarded them as vain and superstitious terrors; and rejected the very idea of the resurrection of the body as a childish and senseless fable.[2] Hence, in progress of time they were disregarded and ridiculed even among the vulgar, who consequently had no notion whatever concerning the resurrection of the body. Their poets, it is true, made frequent mention of the ghosts of departed men appearing in a visible form, and retaining their former shape in the shades below; yet by these representations (if they mean any thing) they mean no more than that the soul, after this life, passes into another state, and is then invested with a body composed of light aërial particles, altogether different from those of which it had previously been composed; but that the gross matter, which they saw laid in the grave and turn to corruption, or which had been reduced to ashes on the funeral pile, and had been scattered in the air, should ever be again collected together, raised from the dead, and revivified; — of this the most speculative philosophers never entertained the slightest conception.

This uncertainty concerning those great and fundamental truths was attended with fatal effects, both in principle and practice. In *principle*, it naturally led mankind to call in question the providence, justice, and goodness of God, when they observed the prosperity of the wicked, and the calamities of the righteous, without being sure that either of them should suffer or be rewarded in another state; or else to doubt whether there really was any essential difference between Virtue and Vice, and whether it did not wholly depend upon the institution of men. In *practice*, hope and fear are the two things which chiefly govern mankind, and influence them in their actions; and they must, of course, govern and influence, more or less, in proportion to the *certainty* there is, that the things feared and hoped for are real,

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[1] Soles occidere et redire possunt:
Nobis, quum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda. *Catullus*, V.

Of the utterly hopeless sorrow of the heathens beyond the grave, some idea may be formed, from the following Pagan inscription, copied by Dr. Maitland from the right-hand wall of the Lapidarian Gallery in the Vatican Museum at Rome:—

C. IVLIVS MAXIMVS
ANN. II. M. V.
ATROX O FORTVNA TRVCI QVAE FVNERE GAVDES
QVID MIHI TAM SVBITO MAXIMUS ERIPITVR
QVI MODO IVCVNDUS GREMIO SVPERESSE SOLEBAT
HIC LAPIS IN TVMVLO NVNC IACET ECCE MATER

Caius Julius Maximus,
(aged)
2 years and five months.
O relentless Fortune, who delightest in cruel death,
Why is Maximus so early snatched from me?
He, who lately used to lie, beloved, on my bosom.
This stone now marks his tomb—behold his mother.
(Maitland's Church in the Catacombs, p. 42.)

[2] Omnibus à supremo die eadem, quæ ante primum: nec magis à morte sensus ullus aut corpori, aut animæ, quam ante natalem.—— . . . Puerilium ista deliramentorum, avidæque nunquam desinere mortalitatis commenta sunt. ' Similis et de asservandis corporibus hominum ac reviviscendi promissa Democrito vanitas . . . Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vii. c. 55.

Neque enim assentior iis, qui hæc nuper disserere cœperunt, cum corporibus simul animos interire, atque omnia morte deleri. Cicero, de Amicitiâ, c. 3.

and the rewards and punishments assuredly to be expected. And as the corrupt inclinations of human nature will overcome any fear, the foundation of which is but doubtful; so these, being let loose and freed from the apprehension of a future account, will of course carry men into all manner of wickedness. Nor is it sufficient to say, that they are under the restraint of *human* laws; since it is certain that very great degrees of wickedness may be both harboured in the heart, and carried into execution, notwithstanding the utmost that human authority can do to prevent it.[1]

2. From the ignorance and uncertainty, which (we have seen) prevailed among some of the greatest teachers of antiquity, concerning those fundamental truths which are the great barriers of virtue and religion, it is evident that the heathens had no perfect scheme of moral rules for piety and good manners. Thus, with the exception of two or three philosophers, they never inculcated the duty of loving our enemies and of forgiving injuries; but, on the contrary, they accounted revenge to be not only lawful, but commendable. Pride and the love of popular applause (the subduing of which is the first principle of true virtue) were esteemed the best and greatest incentives to virtue and noble actions; suicide was regarded as the strongest mark of heroism; and the perpetrators of it, instead of being branded with infamy, were commended and celebrated as men of noble minds. But the interior acts of the soul, — the adultery of the eye and the murder of the heart, — were little regarded. On the contrary, the philosophers countenanced, both by arguments and example, the most flagitious practices. Thus theft, as is well known, was permitted in Egypt and in Sparta[2]: Plato[3] taught the expedience and lawfulness of exposing children in particular cases, and Aristotle, also, of abortion.[4] The exposure of infants, and the putting to death of children who were weak or imperfect in form, was allowed at Sparta by Lycurgus[5]: at Athens, the great seat and nursery of philosophers, the women were treated and disposed of as slaves[6], and it was enacted that "infants, which appeared to be maimed should either be killed

[1] Bp. Gibson's Pastoral Letters, Letter ii. (vol. iv. p. 105. of Bp. Randolph's Enchiridion Theologicum, Oxford, 1792.)

[2] Diod. Sic. lib. i. Plutarch. in Lycurgo.

[3] Plato de Republica, lib. v. At Rome, infanticide was regulated by the laws of Romulus; and this horrid practice was approved both by Plutarch and Seneca. See Jenkin's Reasonableness of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 521. At Rome, a new-born infant was not held legitimate, unless the father, or in his absence some person for him, lifted it up from the ground (*terrâ levasset*) and placed it on his bosom. Hence the phrase *tollere filium*, to educate, *non tollere*, to expose. But even when his children were grown up, their father might imprison, scourge, send them bound to work in the country, and also put them to death by any punishment he pleased, if they deserved it. Adam's Roman Antiquities, p. 47. 5th edit.

[4] Aristot. Polit. lib. vii. c. 17.

[5] Terent. Hecyra.

[6] In republican Athens, *man* was every thing, and woman nothing. "Women were literally the serfs of the family inheritance, whether that inheritance consisted in land or money; they were made, with other property, a subject of testamentary bequest (Demosth. 1. Orat. contra Aphobum. Id. contra Stephanum, Orat. 1.); and, whatever delights heirship might convey to an Athenian lady, freedom of person or inclination was not among the number: single or wedded, she became, by the mere acquisition of property, at the mercy of the nearest male relation in succession: she could be brought from the dull solitude of the gynecæum, to become an unwilling bride, or she could be torn from the object of her wedded affection, to form new ties with perhaps the most disagreeable of mankind. And if, under any of these circumstances, nature became more powerful than virtue, life was the penalty paid for the transgression." (Quarterly Review, vol. xxix. p. 327.)

or exposed;"[1] and that "the Athenians might lawfully invade and enslave any people, who, in their opinion, were fit to be made slaves."[2] The infamous traffic in human blood was permitted to the utmost extent; and, on certain occasions, the owners of slaves had full permission to kill them. Among the Romans, masters had an absolute power over their slaves, whom they might scourge or put to death at pleasure[3]; and this right was exercised with such cruelty, especially in the corrupt ages of the republic, that laws were made, at different times, in order to restrain it. Death was the common punishment; but, for certain crimes, slaves were branded in the forehead, and sometimes were compelled to carry a piece of wood (called *furca*) round their necks wherever they went. When punished capitally, they were commonly crucified.[4] By the Roman laws, a slave could not bear testimony without undergoing the rack: and if the master of a family were slain in his own house, all his domestic slaves were liable to be put to death, though their innocence was ever so manifest.[5] For the relief of the poor and destitute, especially of slaves, no provision whatever was made. By the Romans, who kept them in great numbers, they were most inhumanly neglected, their masters turned them out of doors when sick, and sent them to an island in the river Tiber, where they left them to be cured by the fabled god Æsculapius, who had a temple there. Some masters indeed were so cruel that they killed them when they were sick; but this barbarity was checked by the Emperor Claudius, who decreed that those who put their slaves to death should be punished as murderers; and also that such sick slaves as were turned out by their masters should have their liberty if they recovered.[6] Customary swearing was commended, if not by the precepts, yet by the example of the best moralists among the heathen philosophers, particularly Socrates, Plato, Seneca, and the emperor Julian, in whose works numerous oaths by Jupiter, Hercules, the Sun, and other deities, are very frequent. The gratification of the sensual appetities, and of the most unnatural lusts, was openly taught and allowed. Aristippus maintained, that it was lawful for a wise man to steal, commit adultery, and sacrilege, when opportunity offered: for that none of these actions were naturally evil, setting aside the vulgar opinion, which was introduced by silly and illiterate people; and that a wise man might publicly gratify his libidinous propensities.[7]

Corresponding with such principles was the moral conduct of the

[1] Aristot. Polit. lib. vii. c. 17. [2] Ibid. lib. ii. c. 14.

[3] The celebrated censor, Cato, was a bad master to his unfortunate slaves, whom he never failed to correct with leathern thongs, if they were remiss in their attendance at any entertainments which he gave to his friends, or had suffered any thing to be spoiled. He contrived means to raise quarrels among them, and to keep them at variance, ever suspecting and fearing some bad consequence from their unanimity; and when any of them were guilty of a capital crime, he gave them a formal trial, and in the presence of their fellow-slaves put them to death. Plutarch. in Catone. (Vitæ, tom. ii. pp. 355, 356. Ed. Briani.)

[4] Juvenal, Sat. vi. 219, 220.

[5] Digest. lib. xxix. Tit. v. §§ 1—3. lib. xxxv. Tit. ii. § 11. Tacitus informs us, that when Pedanius Secundus, prefect of the city of Rome, was assassinated by a slave, *all* the slaves in his family (four hundred in number) were put to death. Annal. lib. xiv. c. 42—44. vol. ii. pp. 140—142. edit. Bipont. See also Pliny, Epist. lib. viii. ep. 14.

[6] Suetonius in Claudio, c. 25. [7] Diogenes Laërt. lib. ii. c. 8. § 4.

ancients,—the most distinguished philosophers and heroes not excepted, whose lives are recorded by Plutarch in a manner the most favourable to their reputation. Many of them, it is true, entertained a high sense of honour, and possessed a large portion of patriotism. But these were not *morality*, if by that term we are to understand such dispositions of the mind as are right, fit, and amiable. Their *sense of honour* was not of that kind which made them scorn to do evil; but, like the false honour of modern duellists, consisted merely in a dread of disgrace. Hence many of them not only pleaded for self-murder, (as Cicero, Seneca[1], and others,) but carried about with them the means of destruction, of which they made use rather than fall into the hands of their adversaries, as Demosthenes, Cato, Brutus, Cassius, and others did. And their patriotism, generally speaking, operated not merely in the preservation of their country, but in endeavours to extend and aggrandise it at the expense of other nations: it was a patriotism inconsistent with justice and good-will to mankind. *Truth* was but of small account among many, even of the best heathens; for they taught that, on many occasions, a LIE was to be *preferred to the truth* itself![2] To which we may add, that the unlimited gratification of their sensual appetites, and the commission of unnatural crimes, was common even among the most distinguished teachers of philosophy.[3] "The most notorious vices," says Quinctilian, speaking of the philosophers of his time, "are screened under that name; and they do not labour to maintain the character of philosophers by virtue and study, but conceal the most vicious lives under an austere look and singularity of dress."[4]

There were indeed some *few* philosophers, who cherished better principles, and inculcated, comparatively, purer tenets; but their in-

[1] Seneca pleads for suicide in the following terms:—"If thy mind be melancholy, and in misery, thou mayest put a period to this wretched condition. Wherever thou lookest there is an end to it. See that precipice; there thou mayest have liberty. Seest thou that sea, that river, that well? Liberty is at the bottom of it. That little tree? Freedom hangs upon it Thy own neck, thy own throat, may be a refuge to thee from such servitude; yea, every vein of thy body." De Irâ, lib. iii. c. 15.

[2] Dr. Whitby has collected many maxims of the most eminent heathen sages, in corroboration of the fact above stated. The following examples are taken from his note on Eph. iv. 25.:—

Κρεῖττόν δὲ ἐλεσθαι ψεῦδος ἢ ἀληθὲς κακὸν.—A lie *is better than a hurtful* truth. Menander.

Τὸ γὰρ ἀγαθὸν κρεῖττὸν ἐστι τῆς ἀληθείας.—Good *is better than* truth. Proclus.

Ἔνθα γάρ τι δεῖ καὶ ψεῦδος λεγέσθαι, λεγέσθω.—When telling a lie will be profitable, let it be told.—Darius, in Herodotus, lib. iii. c. 62.

He may lie, who knows how to do it, *ἐν δέοντι καιρῷ, in a suitable time.* Plato apud Stobæum, Serm. 12.

There is nothing decorous in truth but when it is profitable: Yea, sometimes *καὶ ψεῦδος ὤνησεν ἀνθρώπους, καὶ τ' ἄληθες ἔβλαψεν.—Truth is hurtful, and lying is profitable to men.* Maximus Tyrius, Diss. 3. p. 29.

To countenance this practice, Dr. Whitby remarks that both Plato (de Rep. lib. ii. p. 607. and lib. iii. p. 611.) and the Stoics (Stobæus de Stoicis, tom. i. lib. ii. tit. iv. § 4. and Eclogæ, p. 183.), seem to have framed a jesuitical distinction between *lying in words*, and *with an assent to an untruth*, which they called *lying in the soul*. The first they allowed *to an enemy in prospect of advantage, and for many other dispensations in this life.* That is, their wise man may tell a lie, craftily and for gain; but he must not embrace a falsehood through ignorance, or assent to an untruth.

[3] See the evidence collected in Dr. Leland's Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, vol. i. pp. 126—136.

[4] Quinctilian, Ins. Orat. Proœm.

structions were very defective, and they were never able to reform the world, or to keep any number of men in the practice of virtue. Their precepts were delivered to their own immediate pupils, and not to the lower orders of people, who constitute the great mass of society. Concerning these, indeed, the Stoics gave themselves no trouble, but seem to have considered them as little better than beasts. Further, the ethical systems of the philosophers were too refined for the common people; their discourses on subjects of morality being rather nice and subtle disputations than useful instructions; and even those things, of which the philosophers were not only certain themselves, but which they were also able to prove and explain to others with sufficient clearness and plainness (such as are the most obvious and necessary duties of life), they had not sufficient authority to enforce in practice. The truths, which they proved by speculative reason, wanted some still more sensible authority to support them, and render them of more force and efficacy in practice; and the precepts which they delivered, however reasonable and fit to be obeyed, were destitute of weight, and were only the precepts of men.[1] They could press their precepts only by temporal motives. They could not invigorate the patience, excite the industry, stimulate the hopes, or touch the consciences of their hearers, by displaying the awful prospects of eternity. And if *now*, even arguments, founded upon the sublime views of a future state, are often found insufficient to recommend religion and morality, what hopes could *they* have of raising the attention of the multitude?

Hence the wisest instructions of the philosophers were unable to effect any remarkable change in the minds and lives of any considerable number of men; or to make them willing to lay down their lives for the sake of virtue, as the disciples and followers of Christ are known to have done. In speculation, indeed, it may perhaps seem possible, that the precepts of the philosophers might at least be sufficient to reform men's lives for the *future;* but, in experience and practice, it has appeared impossible for philosophy to reform mankind effectually, without the assistance of some higher principle. In fact, the philosophers never did or could effect any remarkable change in the minds and lives of men, such as the preaching of Christ and his apostles undeniably did produce. The wisest and most sensible of the philosophers themselves have not been backward to complain that they found the understanding of men so dark and beclouded, their wills so biassed and inclined to evil, their passions so outrageous and rebellious against reason, that they considered the rules and laws of right reason as very difficult to be practised, and they entertained very little hope of ever being able to persuade the world to submit to them. In short, they confessed that human nature was strangely corrupted; and they acknowledged this corruption to be a disease, of the true cause of which they were ignorant, and for which they could not find out a sufficient remedy; so that the great duties of religion

[1] Quid ergo? nihilne illi [philosophi] simile præcipiunt? Imo permulta et ad verum frequenter accedunt. Sed nihil ponderis habent illa præcepta; quia sunt humana, et auctoritate majori, id est, divinâ illâ carent. Nemo igitur credit; quia tam se hominem putat esse qui audit, quam est ille qui præcipit. Lactantii Institutiones, lib. iii. c. 27.

were laid down by them as matters of speculation and dispute, rather than as rules of action; and they were not so much urged upon the hearts and lives of men, as proposed to their admiration. In short, the heathen philosophy was every way defective and erroneous: and, if there were any thing really *commendable* in it, it was owing to traces and scattered portions of the revelations contained in the Scriptures, with which the philosophers had become acquainted through various channels.

Further, if from the principles and practices that obtained in private life, we ascend to those which influenced the governments of the ancient heathen nations, we shall find that the national spirit, which was cherished by their different states, was every where of an exceptionable character. Thus "the eastern sovereigns aimed, with unbounded ambition, at the establishment and extension of despotic power; ruling, excepting in a few instances, with capricious tyranny and licentious indulgence, while their prostrate subjects were degraded and trampled down like the mire in the streets, and rendered base, superstitious, and vile in manners and conduct. The Grecian states cherished a love of freedom, and a generous ardour for noble actions; but they rarely manifested a respect for justice in their contests with other nations, and little regard to the rights of humanity; while, in the internal regulations of their governments, they seldom adhered to the principles of moderation and equity. Their distinguished men excited jealousy and commotions by ambition; and the general classes of the community exhibited a spirit of base ingratitude towards their benefactors, an ungenerous suspicion of their most virtuous rulers, and a hatred of all who were raised to distinction by preeminent qualities. They calumniated those who were most entitled to praise, and banished men whose talents did honour to the periods in which they lived, and who have transmitted the fame of their several countries to distant times, persecuting to expulsion and death those whose justice and wisdom have excited the admiration of all succeeding ages. The Romans professed to oppose tyranny, and to spare those subjected to their power; but their object was universal dominion. They displayed the virtues of a stern and military people in rising to eminence, and particularly a noble patriotism and devotion to the public interest; but their lusts engendered unceasing wars, and their internal state was disturbed and agitated with contests for an agrarian equality which never could exist, and with tumults of factious men clamouring for freedom, while they promoted sedition, and aimed at exorbitant power. Dissension and civil wars at length subjected them to imperial authority, which soon degenerated into the despotism of men raised by military caprice to a short-lived and precarious power, or brought forward by the chance of revolutions; while the empire was shaken by internal enemies, or sunk in its decline into feebleness and decay The laws of nations were not established upon any foundation commensurate with the importance of their objects; they were ill defined and little respected. War, particularly in its earliest periods, was little better than pillage and piracy.[1] A respect

[1] Homer and Thucidides, lib. i. and Justin, lib. iv. c. 3.

for heralds and ambassadors [1], and for the claims of the vanquished, was often violated." [2]

3. Lastly, if we advert to the pagan nations of the *present age*, we learn from the unanimous testimony of voyagers and travellers, as well as from those who have resided for any considerable time among them, that they are immersed in the grossest ignorance and idolatry, and that their religious doctrine and practices are equally corrupt.

Thus, in Tartary, the Philippine islands, and among the savage nations of Africa, the objects of worship are the sun, moon, and stars, the four elements, and serpents; at Tonquin, the several quarters of the earth; in Guinea, birds, fishes, and even mountains; and almost every where, evil spirits. Together with idolatrous worship, sorcery, divination, and magic almost universally prevail. Among their religious tenets, we may notice that, in Tartary, they believe in two gods, one of heaven, the other of the earth; in Japan, they hold that there are two sorts of gods, and that demons are to be feared; in Formosa, that several gods preside over the several quarters of the earth, one of whom is paramount above the rest, attaining his supremacy by passing through a multitude of bodies; the Tartars and American Indians believe in the transmigration of human souls into the bodies of beasts, and (as many African tribes also believe) that the souls of men after death require meat, drink, and other accommodations of this life. Corresponding with such principles, are the moral conduct of these, and indeed of almost all pagan nations. Polygamy, divorce at the caprice of the husband, and infanticide, are nearly universal; and, almost every where, human lives are sacrificed at the caprice of a tyrannical sovereign.[3] Many of these nations are yet in the deepest barbarism; but if we advert to the actual state of Hindostan and of China, which countries have been highly celebrated for their progress in the useful arts, we shall find that they are equally ignorant of the true object of worship, and equally immoral in private life.

The religion of the Hindoos, like that of the ancient Persians, is affirmed to have originally recognised but one supreme God.[4] But whatever may be found in the Vedas, or books by them accounted sacred, implying the unity of God, is completely disfigured and lost in the multitude of deities or idols associated with him; and in the endless superstitions into which the Hindoo worship has degenerated, from the earliest periods of authentic history. In Hindostan, indeed, the polytheism is of the grossest kind, not fewer than *three hundred and thirty millions of deities* claiming the adoration of their worshippers:—rites the most impure,—penances the most toilsome,—almost

[1] Herod. lib. vii. c. 133.

[2] Bp. Gray on the Connection between the Sacred Writings and the Literature of Jewish and Heathen Authors, &c. vol. i. pp. 217, 218. 220.

[3] See Millar's History of the Propagation of Christianity, vol. ii. ch. vii. pp. 197—337.

[4] See Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. p. 172., where the same thing is asserted of the faith of the Arabs and Tartars. See also Sir John Malcolm's Sketch of the Sikhs, p. 147., where the Hindoos are said to have degenerated from a worship, originally pure, into idolatry; though it is, at the same time, admitted in a note, "that the most ancient Hindoos, though they adored God, *worshipped the sun and elements.*"

innumerable modes of self-torture, as various and extraordinary in kind as a distorted fancy can suggest, and as exquisite in degree as human nature can sustain, — the burning or burying of widows, infanticide, the immersion of the sick or dying in the Ganges, and self-devotement to destruction by the idol Juggernaut, are among the horrid practices that flow from the system of idolatry established among them, and which are exceeded in folly or ferocity by none to which paganism has given birth. The manifest effects of this system are, an immersion into the grossest moral darkness, and a universal corruption of manners. The Hindoo is taught that the image which he beholds is really God, and the heaviest judgments are denounced against him, if he dare to suspect that it is nothing more than the elements of which it is composed.[1] In the apprehensions of the people in general, the idols are real deities; they occupy the place of God, and receive that homage, fear, service, and honour which the ALMIGHTY CREATOR so justly claims. The government of God is subverted, together with all the moral effects arising from the knowledge of his perfections and his claims upon his rational creatures. There are, it is true, eastern maxims of morality, which perhaps are not inferior to the purest doctrines of the Greeks and Romans; and it will not be denied by those who have examined them, that they have many points of resemblance even to Christian morality.[2] But, in consequence of the total want of authority (common to them with all other heathen nations), either to enforce what is pure in their morality or to emancipate the people from the most inveterate and detestable usages, the Hindoos present to us all the same inherent defects which characterise the morality of the ancient western heathens. Institutions of a most malignant nature exist among them, by which the superior and privileged orders are enabled to keep the people in perpetual ignorance and slavery; and to exclude them for ever from the comforts, the duties, and even the society of their fellows. Hence the universal characteristics of the Hindoos are, habitual disregard of truth, pride, tyranny, theft, falsehood, deceit, conjugal infidelity, filial disobedience, ingratitude (the Hindoos have no word expressive of thanks), a litigious spirit, perjury [3], treachery, covetousness, gaming, servility, hatred, revenge [4], cruelty, private murder, the destruction of illegitimate children, particularly by procuring abortion (not fewer than *ten thousand* children have been computed to be thus murdered

[1] Asiat. Researches, vol. viii. pp. 297, 298.

[2] See Asiat. Researches, vol. iv. pp. 166, 167.

[3] "False witnesses may be obtained in every place, on the slightest notice, and for a mere trifle. Their price varies in different zillahs: in some sixteen may be had for a rupee, in others ten; but four annas each is what no true son of the trade was ever known to refuse in the interior; and at this rate any number may be collected, to testify to facts they never witnessed." Essays relative to the Habits, &c. of the Hindoos, pp. 316, 317. London, 1823. 8vo.

[4] Where other revenge for a supposed injury is not in their power, they are known to destroy themselves, expressly in order that the guilt of their death may rest upon their enemies; and in the hope, that, in the process of the metempsychosis (to which they give implicit credit), they may have more speedy opportunity of wreaking their full vengeance on the offender. This custom is called *Dhurna*. See Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. p. 337.

in the single province of Bengal every month), and want of tenderness and compassion to the poor, the sick, and the dying.[1]

The religious and moral state of China, though less degraded than that of the Hindoos, is deplorable, notwithstanding its boasted superiority in arts and sciences, and in the wisdom of its institutions. Religion, as a system of divine worship, as piety towards God, and as holding forth future rewards and punishments, can hardly be said to exist among the Chinese. They have no sabbatical institution, no congregational worship, no external forms of devotion, petition, or thanksgiving to the Supreme Being: the emperor, and he alone,—being high priest, and the only individual who stands between heaven and the people, having the same relation to the former that the latter are supposed to bear to him,—performs the sacred duties according to the ancient ritual, and at certain fixed periods, but the people have no concern with them. All ranks, from the emperor downwards, are full of absurd superstitions, and worship a multitude of imaginary deities. Most of the forms of mythology, which make any figure in the page of history, now exist in China. The Chinese have gods celestial, terrestrial, and subterraneous—gods of the hills, of the valleys, of the woods, of the districts, of the families, of the shop, and of the kitchen!—gods, that are supposed to preside over the thunder, the rain, the fire; over the grain, over diseases, births, and deaths; their idols are silver and gold, wood and stone, and clay, carved or molten. Altars are erected on the high hills, in the groves, and under the green trees; and idols are set up at the corners of the streets, on the sides of the highways, on the banks of canals, in boats and in ships. Astrology, divination, geomancy, and necromancy every where prevail: charms and spells every one possesses. The absurd notion of the transmigration of souls into other bodies is universal; and other articles of faith prevail among them, as various as the modes of worship; in all which the people appear to be rather actuated by the dread of evil in this life, than by the fear of punishment in another. The duties which they perform are more with a view to appease an angry deity, and avert impending calamities, than from any hope of obtaining a positive good. They rather consult or inquire of their gods what may happen, than petition them to grant it, for a Chinese can scarcely be said to pray. He is grateful when the event proves favourable to his wishes, petulant and peevish with his gods when it is adverse. Though some *individual* instances of integrity have occurred in the intercourse of the Chinese with Europeans, yet their *general* character is that of fraud, lying, and hypocrisy. Polygamy universally prevails, as also the cruel practice of exposing infants to perish, not fewer than nine thousand of whom are computed to be annually destroyed at Pekin, and the same number in the rest of the empire.[2]

[1] See Ward's History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos, 4 vols. 8vo. where the facts above noticed are fully detailed. See also Dr. Buchanan's Christian Researches in Asia, and especially Mr. Charles Grant's "Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain, particularly with respect to morals, and on the means of improving it," in vol. x. of the Reports of the House of Commons (1812—1813.) Tit. East India Company, Fourth Part.

[2] Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica, vol. iii. part i. article *China*. Barrow's

Nor is the case materially different with the Mohammedans. Though their religion includes the acknowledgment of one living and true God; yet rejecting the Messiah, and attaching themselves to a sanguinary and lascivious impostor, it produces no good effect upon their morals, but leaves them under the dominion of barbarity and voluptuousness. These and similar instances of corruption in worship, doctrine, and practice, which have prevailed and still exist in the heathen world, fully prove the utter insufficiency of natural reason to be a guide in religion; and also show into what monstrous opinions and practices whole nations may be led, where that is their guide, without any help from revelation. Nor will it diminish the force of this argument, to say that these instances of corruption are owing to an undue use of their reason, or that the measure of reason, possessed by the heathen nations, is low and imperfect; since they are sufficiently skilful in whatever concerns their political or personal interests, in the arts of annoying their neighbours, and defending themselves against incursions, in forming alliances for their defence, and conducting the ordinary affairs of life according to the manners and customs of their several countries. Nor are the absurdities in religion, which are found among the modern heathen nations, greater than those which (we have already seen [1]) existed among the polished nations of antiquity before the publication of the Gospel: which are a joint proof that no age or country, whether rude or civilised, instructed or uninstructed, infected or uninfected with plenty or luxury, is or can be secured by mere natural reason against falling into the grossest errors and corruptions in religion; and, consequently, that all mankind stand in need of a divine revelation to make known to them the will of God, and the duties and obligations which they owe to their Creator.

V. Notwithstanding these important *facts*, and regardless of the confessions of the most distinguished ancient philosophers of their need of a revelation, it is OBJECTED by many in our own times, that there is no necessity for one; that the book of nature is the only book to be studied; and that philosophy and right reason are sufficient to instruct and to preserve men in their duty.

ANSWER 1. It is an undeniable fact, that the doctrines of Christianity (without considering at present what evidence and authority they possess) have had a more powerful influence upon men, than all the reasonings of the philosophers: and though modern opposers of revelation ascribe the ignorance and corruption of the heathen, not to the insufficiency of the light of reason, but to their non-improvement of that light; yet, if this were true, it would not prove that there is no need of a revelation, because it *is certain* that the philosophers wanted some higher assistance than that of reason.

ANSWER 2. With regard to the pretences of modern deists, it is to be observed that almost all men, where the Scriptures have been unknown, have in every age been gross idolaters; the few exceptions

Travels in China, pp. 418—487. Milne's Retrospect of the Protestant Mission to China, pp. 29, 30.

[1] See pp. 4—10. *suprà.*

that have existed, being in general a kind of atheistical philosophers. Deists, properly so called, are chiefly found in Christian countries, in the later ages, since Christianity has extensively prevailed over idolatry[1], and in the countries where gross pagan idolatry could no longer be practised with credit and security. In these circumstances, deists acquire, as it were at second-hand, their glimmering light from the book to which they oppose it; and it is a fact that almost all the things, which have been said wisely and truly by them, ARE MANIFESTLY BORROWED FROM THAT REVELATION WHICH THEY REFUSE TO EMBRACE, AND WITHOUT WHICH THEY NEVER COULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO HAVE DELIVERED SUCH TRUTHS. *Now*, indeed, that our whole duty is clearly revealed, we not only see its agreement *with* reason, but are also enabled to deduce its obligation *from* reason: but, if we had been destitute of all revealed religion, it would have been a work of extreme difficulty to have discovered our duty in all points. What ground indeed have the modern contemners of revelation to imagine, that, if they had lived without the light of the Gospel, they would have been wiser than Socrates, Plato, and Cicero? How are they certain that they would have made such a right use of their reason, as to have discovered truth? If their lot had been among the vulgar, are they sure that they would not have been idolaters? If they had joined themselves to the philosophers, what sect would they have followed? Or, if they had set up for themselves, how are they certain that they would have been skilful enough to have deduced the several branches of their duty, or to have applied them to the several cases of life, by argumentation and force of reason? It is *one* thing to perceive that the rules of life, which are laid before us, are agreeable to reason, and *another* thing to find out those rules by the mere light of reason. We see that many, who profess

[1] The name of *Deists*, as applied to those who are no friends to revealed religion, is said to have been first assumed, about the middle of the sixteenth century, by some gentlemen in France and Italy, who were willing to cover their opposition to the Christian revelation by a more honourable name than that of *Atheists*. The earliest author who mentions them is Viret, a divine of great eminence among the first reformers; who, in the epistle dedicatory prefixed to the first tome of his "*Instruction Chrétienne*" (which was published in 1563), speaks of some persons at that time who called themselves by a new name, that of *Deists*. These, he tells us, professed to believe a God, but showed no regard to Jesus Christ, and considered the doctrine of the apostles and evangelists as fables and dreams. He adds that they laughed at *all* religion; notwithstanding they conformed themselves, externally, to the religion of those with whom they were obliged to live, or whom they were desirous of pleasing, or whom they feared. Some of them, he observes, professed to believe the immortality of the soul: others were of the Epicurean opinion in this point, as well as about the providence of God with respect to mankind, as if he did not concern himself in the government of human affairs. He adds, that many among them set up for learning and philosophy, and were considered as persons of an acute and subtile genius; and that, not content to perish alone in their error, they took pains to spread the poison, and to infect and corrupt others by their impious discourses, and their bad examples. Viret, Instruction Chrétienne, Epistre Dedicatoire, cited in Bayle's Dictionnaire, tom. iv. article Viret, note D.

Modern infidelity, though it may assume the title of Deism, is in fact little better than disguised atheism. A man seldom retains for any length of time his first deistical opinions; his errors gradually multiply, till he sinks to the last gradation of impiety. The testimony of an infidel writer substantiates this point. "Deism," says he, "is but the first step of reason out of superstition. No person remains a Deist, but through want of reflection, timidity, passion, or obstinacy."—Brittan's Modern Infidelity pourtrayed, p. 9

to govern themselves by the written rules of revealed religion, are nevertheless ignorant of their duty; and how can any man be sure that *he* should have made such a good use of his reason, as to have perfectly understood his duty without help? We see that many of those, who profess firmly to believe in that great and everlasting happiness which Christ has promised to obedience, and that great and eternal misery which he has threatened against disobedience, are yet hurried away by their lusts and passions to transgress the conditions of that covenant to which these promises and threatenings are annexed; and how can any man be sure that he should be able to overcome these temptations, if these motives were less known, or less powerfully enforced? But, suppose that he could by strength of reason demonstrate all these things to *himself* with the utmost possible clearness and distinctness, yet all men are not equally capable of being philosophers, though all men are obliged to be equally religious. At least, thus much is certain, that the rewards and punishments of another world cannot be so powerfully enforced, in order to influence the lives of men, by a demonstration of their reality from abstract reasoning, as by one who assures them, by sufficient credentials, that he has actually been in that other state.

ANSWER 3. Besides, the contradictory and discordant speculations of the modern opposers of revelation, who boast that reason is their God (even if they had not long since been fully answered), are so great and so glaring, and the precepts delivered by them for a rule of life are so utterly subversive of every principle of morality, as to demonstrate the absolute necessity of a divine revelation *now* (supposing one had never been given), in order to lead men to the worship and knowledge of the true God, and also to impart to them the knowledge of their duties to him, and towards one another. A brief statement of the recorded opinions of the principal opposers of revelation in modern times will prove and justify this remark.

1. *Concerning religion, the worship of God, and the expectations of mankind respecting a future state:—*

Lord HERBERT of Cherbury (who wrote in the former part of the seventeenth century, and was the first, as he was the greatest and best of the modern deistical philosophers,) has laid down the following positions, viz. that Christianity is the best religion; — that his own universal religion of nature agrees wholly with Christianity, and contributes to its establishment; — that all revealed religion (meaning Christianity) is absolutely uncertain, and of little or no use; — that there is one supreme God, who is chiefly to be worshipped; — that piety and virtue are the principal part of his worship; — that we must repent of our sins, and, if we do so, God will pardon them; — that there are rewards for good men, and punishments for wicked men in a future state; — that these principles of his universal religion are clearly known to all men, and that they were principally unknown to the Gentiles (who comprised almost all men). Yet, notwithstanding his declaration in favour of Christianity, he accuses all pretences to revelation of folly and unreasonableness, and contemptuously rejects its capital doctrines.

Mr. Hobbes, who was partly contemporary with Lord Herbert, affirms that the Scriptures are the voice of God, and yet that they have no authority but what they derive from the prince or the civil power; — he acknowledges that inspiration is a supernatural gift, and the immediate hand of God, and yet the pretence to it is a sign of madness; — that a subject may hold firmly the faith of Christ in his heart, and yet may lawfully deny him before the magistrate, and that in such a case it is not he that denies Christ before men, but his governor and the laws of his country; — that God exists, and yet that that which is not matter is nothing; that honour, worship, prayer, and praise are due to God, and yet that all religion is ridiculous.

Mr. Blount, who lived during the latter part of the seventeenth century, maintained that there is an infinite and eternal God, the creator of all things, and yet he insinuates that the world was eternal;— that the worship we owe to God consists in prayer to Him, and in praise of Him, and yet he objects to prayer as a duty; that we are to expect rewards and punishments hereafter, according to our actions in this life, which includes the immortality of the soul, and yet that the soul of man is probably material (and of course mortal).

The Earl of Shaftesbury lived during the close of the seventeenth and the early part of the eighteenth century. He affirms that nothing can be more fatal to virtue than the weak and uncertain belief of future rewards and punishments; and that this belief takes away all motives to virtue; — that the hope of rewards and the fear of punishments make virtue mercenary; that it is disingenuous and servile to be influenced by rewards; and that the hope of rewards cannot consist with virtue; and yet that the hope of rewards is so far from being derogatory to virtue, that it is a proof we love virtue; —that however mercenary the hope of rewards and the fear of punishments may be accounted, it is in many instances a great advantage, security, and support of virtue; that all obligation to be virtuous arises from the advantages (that is, the rewards) of virtue, and from the disadvantages (that is, the punishments) of vice; — that those are to be censured who represent the Gospel as a fraud; that he hopes the Select Sermons of Dr. Whichcot (to which Lord Shaftesbury had written an elegant preface) will induce the enemies of Christianity to like it better, and make Christians prize it the more; and that he hopes Christians will be secured against the temper of the irreconcileable enemies of the faith of the Gospel; and yet he represents salvation as a ridiculous thing; and insinuates that Christ was influenced and directed by deep designs of ambition, and cherished a savage zeal and persecuting spirit; and that the Scriptures were a mere artful invention, to secure a profitable monopoly (that is, of sinister advantages to the inventors); — that man is born to religion, piety, and adoration, as well as to honour and friendship; — that virtue is not complete without piety; yet he labours to make virtue wholly independent of piety; — that all the warrant for the authority of religious symbols (that is, the institutions of Christianity) is the authority of the magistrate; — that the magistrate is the sole judge of religious truth, and of revelation; —that miracles are ridiculous; and that, if

true, they would be no proof of the truth of revelation; — that ridicule is the test of truth; and yet, that ridicule itself must be brought to the test of reason; — that the Christian religion ought to be received when established by the magistrate; yet he grossly ridicules it where it was thus established; — that religion and virtue appear to be so nearly connected, that they are presumed to be inseparable companions; and yet that atheists often conduct themselves so well, as to seem to force us to confess them virtuous; — that he, who denies a God, sets up an opinion against the very well-being of society; and yet that atheism has no direct natural tendency to take away a just sense of right and wrong.

MR. COLLINS also wrote in the early part of the eighteenth century, and published a variety of objections against revelation. He affirms that man is a mere machine; — that the soul is material and mortal; — that Christ and his apostles built on the predictions of fortune-tellers and divines; — that the prophets were mere fortune-tellers, and discoverers of lost goods; — that Christianity stands wholly on a false foundation; yet he speaks respectfully of Christianity; and also of the Epicureans, whom he at the same time considers as atheists.

Contemporary with Collins was Mr. WOOLSTON; who, in his Discourses on the Miracles of our Saviour, under the pretence of vindicating the allegorical sense of Scripture, endeavours absolutely to destroy the truth of the facts recorded in the Gospels. This writer asserts, that he is the farthest of any man from being engaged in the cause of infidelity; — that infidelity has no place in his heart; — that he writes for the honour of Jesus and in defence of Christianity; — and that his design in writing is to advance the Messiahship and truth of the holy Jesus; "to whom," he says, "be glory for ever, Amen;" and yet, that the Gospels are full of incredibilities, impossibilities, and absurdities; — that they resemble Gulliverian tales of persons and things, which out of romance never had a being; — that the miracles, recorded in the Gospels, taken literally, will not abide the test of reason and common sense, but must be rejected, and the authority of Jesus along with them; and at the same time, he casts the most scurrilous reflections on Christ.

With the two preceding writers DRS. TINDAL and MORGAN were contemporary. The former declares that Christianity, stripped of the additions which mistake, policy, and circumstances, have made to it, is a most holy religion; and yet, that the Scriptures are obscure, and fit only to perplex men, and that the two great parts of them are contradictory; — that all the doctrines of Christianity plainly speak themselves to be the will of an infinitely wise and holy God; and yet, that the precepts of Christianity are loose, undetermined, incapable of being understood by mankind at large, give wrong and unworthy apprehensions of God, and are generally false and pernicious; — that natural religion is so plain to all, even the most ignorant men, that God could not make it plainer, even if he were to convey, miraculously, the very same ideas to all men; and yet, that almost all mankind have had very unworthy notions of God, and very wrong

apprehensions of natural religion; — that the principles of natural religion are so clear, that men cannot possibly mistake them; and yet that almost all men have grossly mistaken them, and imbibed a superstition worse than atheism. Dr. Morgan asserts that God may communicate his will by immediate inspiration, and yet that it can never be proved that he has thus communicated his will, and that we are not to receive any thing on the authority of revelation.

Nearly at the same time were published numerous tracts by Mr. Chubb, in some of which he assumed the garb of Christianity, though it is not difficult to perceive that his true intention was to betray it. He declares that he hopes to share with his friends in the favour of God, in that peaceful and happy state which God has prepared for the virtuous and faithful, in some other future world; and yet, that God does not interpose in the affairs of this world at all, and has nothing to do with the good or evil done by men here; — that prayer may be useful, as a positive institution, by introducing proper thoughts, affections, and actions; and yet he intimates that it must be displeasing to God, and directly improper; — that a state of rewards and punishments hereafter is one of the truths which are of the highest concern to men; and yet, that the arguments for the immortality of the soul are wholly unsatisfactory; and that the soul is probably matter; — that men are accountable to God for all their conduct, and will certainly be judged and dealt with according to the truth and reality of their respective cases; and yet, that men will not be judged for their impiety or ingratitude to God, nor for their injustice and unkindness to each other; but only for voluntary injuries to the public; and that even this is unnecessary and useless; — that God may kindly reveal to the world, when greatly vitiated by error and ignorance, truths necessary to be known, and precepts necessary to be obeyed; and yet, that such a revelation would be, of course, uncertain and useless; — that Christ's mission is, at least in his view, probably divine; and yet, that Christ, in his opinion, was of no higher character than the founder of the Christian sect (that is, another Sadoc, Cerinthus, or Herbert); — that the New Testament, particularly the writings of the apostles, contain excellent cautions and instructions for our right conduct; and that the New Testament yields much clearer light than any other traditionary revelation; and yet that the New Testament has contributed to the perplexity and confusion of mankind, and exhibits doctrines heretical, dishonourable to God, and injurious to men; and that the apostles were impostors; and that the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles resemble Jewish fables and popish legends rather than accounts of facts; — that as, on the Christian scheme, Christ will be the judge of the quick and the dead, he has not on this account (that is, admitting this to be true) any disagreeable apprehension on account of what he has written; and yet he ridicules the birth and resurrection of Christ, represents his instructions as inferior to those of the heathen philosophers and lawgivers, asserts his doctrines to be dishonourable to God and injurious to mankind, and allows him not to be sinless, but merely not a gross sinner. He further declares, that the resurrection of Christ, if true,

proves not the immortality of the soul; — that the belief of a future state is of no advantage to society; — that all religions are alike; — that it is of no consequence what religion a man embraces; and he allows not any room for dependence on God's providence, trust in him, and resignation to his will, as parts of duty or religion.

LORD BOLINGBROKE declares that power and wisdom are the only attributes of God, which can be discovered by mankind; and yet that he is as far from denying the justice as the power of God; that his goodness is manifest; at the same time he ascribes every other perfection to God, as well as wisdom and power, and says this is rational; — that the wisdom of God is merely a natural attribute, and in no sense moral; and yet that the wisdom of God operates in choosing what is fittest to be done (of course it is a moral attribute, involving perfect moral rectitude, as well as perfect knowledge); — that God is gracious and beneficent; — that whatever God has done is just and good; — that such moral perfections are in God as Christians ascribe to him; yet he censures divines for ascribing these perfections to God; — that we learn from our own power and wisdom, the power and wisdom of God; and yet that it is profane to ascribe the excellencies of our nature to God, although without limit or imperfection. He undertakes to defend the righteousness of God against divines; and yet asserts that holiness and righteousness in God are like nothing in men; that they cannot be conceived of by men, nor argued about with any certainty; and that to talk of imitating God in his moral attributes is blasphemy; — that God made all things; and yet that he did not determine the existence of particular men (of course he did not determine the existence of any man, all men being particular men); — that he will not presume to deny that there have been particular providences; and yet that there is no foundation for the belief of any such providences, and that it is absurd and profane to assert or believe them; — that God is just, and that justice requires that rewards or punishments be measured to particular cases, according to their circumstances, in proportion to the merit or demerit of every individual; and yet that God does not so measure out rewards or punishments; and that, if he did, he would subvert human affairs; that he concerns not himself with the affairs of men at all; or, if he does, that he regards only collective bodies of men, not individuals; that he punishes none, except through the magistrate; and that there will be no state of future rewards or punishments; — that divines are deserving of censure for saying that God made man to be happy; and yet he asserts that God made man to be happy here, and that the end of the human state is happiness; — that the religion of nature is clear and obvious to all mankind; and yet that it has been unknown to the greatest part of mankind; — that we know material substance, and are assured of it; and yet that we know nothing of either matter or spirit; — that there is, undeniably, something in our constitution beyond the known properties of matter; and yet that the soul is material and mortal; and that to say the soul is immaterial, is the same thing as to say that two and two are five; — that self-love is the great law of our nature; and yet that universal benevolence is

the great law of our nature; — that Christianity is a republication of the religion of nature, and a benevolent system; that its morals are pure; and that he is determined to seek for genuine Christianity with the simplicity of spirit with which Christ himself taught it in the Gospel; and yet a great part of his works, particularly of his philosophical works, was written for no other end but to destroy Christianity. He also declares that there is no conscience in man, except artificially; — that it is more natural to believe many gods than to believe one.

During the latter part of the eighteenth century flourished DAVID HUME, whose acuteness of observation, and elegant style, have secured for his writings an extensive circulation. He asserts that there is no perceptible connection between cause and effect; — that the belief of such connection is merely a matter of custom; — that experience can show us no such connection; — that we cannot with any reason conclude that, because an effect has taken place once, it will take place again; — that it is uncertain and useless to argue from the course of nature, and infer an intelligent cause; — that we cannot, from any analogy of nature, argue the existence of an intelligent cause of all things; — that there is no reason to believe that the universe proceeded from a cause; — that there are no solid arguments to prove the existence of a God; — that experience can furnish no argument concerning matters of fact, is in this case useless, and can give rise to no inference or conclusion; and yet, that experience is our only guide in matters of fact, and the existence of objects; — that it is universally allowed that nothing exists without a cause; — that every effect is so precisely determined that no other effect could, in such circumstances, have possibly resulted from the operation of its cause; — that the relation of cause is absolutely necessary to the propagation of our species, and the regulation of our conduct; — that voluntary actions are necessary, and determined by a fixed connection between cause and effect; — that motives are causes operating necessarily on the will; — that man is a mere machine (that is, an object operated on necessarily by external causes); — that there is no contingency (that is, nothing happening without a settled cause) in the universe; and that matter and motion may be regarded as the cause of thought (that is, the soul is a material cause, and thought its effect); — that God discovers to us only faint traces of his character, and that it would be flattery or presumption to ascribe to him any perfection which is not discovered to the full in his works (and of course, that it would be flattery or presumption to ascribe any perfection to God); — that it is unreasonable to believe God to be wise and good; — that what we believe to be a perfection in God may be a defect (that is, holiness, justice, wisdom, goodness, mercy, and truth, may be defects in God); consequently, injustice, folly, malice, and falsehood may be excellencies in his character; — that no reward or punishment can be rationally expected beyond what is already known by experience and observation.

While Hume and Bolingbroke were propagating these sentiments in England, Voltaire, Diderot, D'Alembert, Frederick II. King of

Prussia, and other distinguished writers on the continent, had confederated for the avowed purpose of annihilating the Christian religion. The printed works of the three first-named writers are too voluminous to admit of extracts; but it may be stated generally that their private correspondence, which has been published, exhibits a total disregard of truth and honour, together with such a disgusting compound of falsehood, envy, malignity, hatred, contempt of one another and of all the world, as cannot but convey a horrible impression of the spirit and tendency of infidelity. It is, however, principally in the posthumous works of the King of Prussia that we see a faithful delineation of the real tenets and opinions of the most celebrated philosophers of the Continent, of the founders and legislators of the great empire of infidelity, with the philosophic monarch himself at their head. Every secret of their hearts is there laid open in their familiar and confidential correspondence with each other; and there we see that they were pretended deists, but *real* atheists; that, although the name of a Supreme Being was sometimes mentioned, yet it was seldom mentioned but with ridicule and contempt; and that they never conceived him to be anything more than the intelligent principle that animates all nature, the source of life and motion, the sensorium of the universe; but in other respects totally unconnected with this earth and its inhabitants. "In consequence of this doctrine, these philosophers rejected all idea of a providence and a moral governor of the world. They ascribed every effect to fate or fortune, to necessity or chance; they denied the existence of a soul distinct from the body; they conceived man to be nothing more than an organised lump of matter, a mere machine, an ingenious piece of clock-work, which, when the wheels refuse to act, stands still, and loses all power and motion for ever. They acknowledged nothing beyond the grave, no resurrection, no future existence, no future retribution; they considered death as an eternal sleep, as the total extinction of our being; and they stigmatised all opinions different from these with the names of superstition, bigotry, priestcraft, fanaticism, and idolatry." [1]

Such are the various, contradictory, and impious tenets promulgated by the most eminent champions of what is called deism [2] (and which have been repeated in different ways by the opposers of revelation in our age), concerning religion, the worship of God, and the expectations of mankind respecting a future state. We shall only add, that though the infidels of the present day profess to be the disciples of nature, and to receive her unerring instructions, yet they differ from each other with an almost endless variety. Having gradually receded from true Christianity to false, — some are unbelievers in the nature, — some in the providence, — and others even in the existence of a God; but all of them are unanimous in rejecting the

[1] Bp. Porteus's Charge in 1794. (Tracts, pp. 266, 267.)

[2] Dr. Dwight's Nature, &c. of Infidel Philosophy, pp. 20—42. Most of the preceding statements of the opposers of revelation, as well as of those which follow concerning morals, are selected from Dr. Leland's View of the Deistical Writers, where their identical expressions are given, and their fallacies are exposed with great depth of argument and learning.

divine testimony, and in renouncing the God of the Bible. Let us now take a brief view,

2. *Of their precepts concerning morals.*

LORD HERBERT declared that men are not hastily, or on small grounds, to be condemned, who are led to sin by bodily constitution; — that the indulgence of lust and of anger is no more to be blamed than the thirst occasioned by the dropsy, or the drowsiness produced by lethargy.

MR. HOBBES asserted that the civil or municipal law is the only foundation of right and wrong; that where there is no civil law, every man's judgment is the only standard of right and wrong; — that the sovereign is not bound by any obligation of truth or justice, and can do no wrong to his subjects; — that every man has a right to all things, and may lawfully get them if he can.

LORD BOLINGBROKE resolved all morality into self-love as its principle, and taught that ambition, the lust of power, sensuality, and avarice, may be lawfully gratified, if they can be *safely* gratified; — that the sole foundation of modesty is vanity, or a wish to show ourselves superior to mere animals; that man lives only in the present world, and is only a superior animal; — that the chief end of man is to gratify the appetites and inclinations of the flesh; — that modesty is inspired by mere prejudice; and that polygamy is a part of the law or religion of nature. He also intimates that adultery is no violation of the law of nature; and that there is no wrong, except in the highest lewdness.

Mr. HUME (the immorality of whose principles is displayed in his private correspondence [1]) maintained that self-denial, self-mortification, and humility are not virtues, but are useless and mischievous; — that they stupify the understanding, sour the temper, and harden the heart; — that pride, self-valuation, ingenuity, eloquence, quickness of thought, easiness of expression, delicacy of taste, strength of body, and cleanliness are virtues; and consequently, that to want honesty, to want understanding, and to want strength of body, are equally the subjects of moral disapprobation; — that adultery *must* be practised, if men would obtain all the advantages of life; — that, if generally practised, it would in time cease to be scandalous; and that, if practised secretly and frequently, it would by degrees come to be thought no crime at all ! ! !

MR. GIBBON, one of the most decent of modern infidels, has given a biographical account of himself, and what is the result of the moral portrait there exhibited? Amid all the polish and splendour of literary culture, not a single line of moral beauty is perceptible. There is " no fear of God, no reverence for sacred things, no regard for the welfare of the human race; but the most heartless and sordid selfishness, vain-glory, a desire of admiration, adulation of the great and wealthy, contempt of the poor, and supreme devotedness to his own gratification."

[1] "Correspondence of David Hume with several distinguished persons." London, 1820. 4to.

Both VOLTAIRE and HELVETIUS advocated the unlimited gratification of the sensual appetites, and the latter held that it is not agreeable to policy to regard *gallantry* (that is, unlawful intercourse with married women) as a vice in a moral sense; and that, if men will call it a vice, it must be acknowledged that there are vices which are useful in certain ages and countries! In other words, that in those countries such vices are virtues.[1] ROUSSEAU, — a thief, a liar, and a debauched profligate, who sent his children to the poor-house for support during the whole of his life, according to his own printed "Confessions," — also had recourse to *feelings* as his standard of morality. "I have only to consult myself," said he, "concerning what I do. All that I *feel* to be right, is right. Whatever I *feel* to be wrong, is wrong. All the morality of our actions lies in the judgment we ourselves form of them."[2] And just before the French revolution broke out, it is a known fact that the idea of moral obligation was exploded among the infidel clubs that existed in every part of France.

Such is the morality taught and practised by some of those who have claimed to be received as the masters of reason. It were no difficult task to add to their precepts many similar statements from the opponents of revelation in our own times; but as they only re-assert the atheistical and immoral tenets of their predecessors with increased malignity and grossness, we shall spare the reader the pain of perusing passages that cannot but shock the mind of every one who cherishes the least regard for decency or social order. Let us advert, however, for a moment, to the effects produced by these principles on an *entire people*, and also on *individuals*.

The only instance in which the avowed rejectors of revelation have possessed the supreme power and government of a country, and have attempted to dispose of human happiness according to their own doctrines and wishes, is that of France during the greater part of the revolution, which, it is now well known, was effected by the abettors of infidelity. The great majority of the nation had become infidels. The name and profession of Christianity was renounced by the legislature; and the abolition of the Christian era was proclaimed. Death was declared by an act of the republican government to be an eternal sleep. The existence of the Deity, and the immortality of the soul, were formally disavowed by the National Convention; and the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead was declared to have been only preached by superstition for the torment of the living. All the religions in the world were proclaimed to be the daughters of ignorance and pride; and it was decreed to be the duty of the convention to assume the honourable office of disseminating atheism (which was blasphemously affirmed to be truth) over all the world. As a part of this duty, the convention further decreed that its express renunciation of all religious worship should, like its invitations to rebellion, be translated into all foreign languages; and it was asserted and received

[1] Helvetius, De l'Esprit, tom. i. disc. 2. ch. 15. p. 176. *et seq.*
[2] Emile, tom. i. pp. 166—168.

in the convention, that the adversaries of religion had deserved well of their country! Correspondent with these professions and declarations were the effects actually produced. Public worship was utterly abolished. The churches were converted into "temples of reason," in which atheistical and licentious homilies were substituted for the proscribed service; and an absurd and ludicrous imitation of the pagan mythology was exhibited under the title of the "religion of reason." In the principal church of every town a tutelary goddess was installed with a ceremony equally pedantic, frivolous, and profane; and the females selected to personify this new divinity were mostly prostitutes, who received the adorations of the attendant municipal officers, and of the multitudes, whom fear, or force, or motives of gain, had collected together on the occasion. *Contempt* for religion or decency became the test of attachment to the government; and the gross infraction of any moral or social duty was deemed a proof of civism, and a victory over prejudice. All distinctions of right and wrong were confounded. The grossest debauchery triumphed. The reign of atheism and of reason was the reign of terror. "Then proscription followed upon proscription; tragedy followed after tragedy, in almost breathless succession, on the theatre of France. Almost the whole nation was converted into a horde of assassins. Democracy and atheism, hand in hand, desolated the country, and converted it into one vast field of rapine and of blood." In one part of France, the course of a river (the Loire) was impeded by the drowned bodies of the ministers of religion, several hundreds of whom were destroyed in its waters; children were sentenced to death for the faith and loyalty of their parents; and they, whose infancy had sheltered them from the fire of the soldiery, were bayoneted as they clung about the knees of their destroyers. The moral and social ties were unloosed, or rather torn asunder. For a man to accuse his own father was declared to be an act of civism, worthy of a true republican; and to neglect it, was pronounced a crime that should be punished with death. Accordingly, women denounced their husbands, and mothers their sons, as bad citizens and traitors; while many women,—not of the dress of the common people nor of infamous reputation, but respectable in character and appearance,—seized with savage ferocity between their teeth the mangled limbs of their murdered countrymen. "France during this period was a theatre of crimes, which, after all preceding perpetrations, have excited in the mind of every spectator amazement and horror. The miseries suffered by that single nation have changed all the histories of the preceding sufferings of mankind into idle tales, and have been enhanced and multiplied without a precedent, without a number, and without a name. The kingdom appeared to be changed into one great prison; the inhabitants converted into felons; and the common doom of man commuted for the violence of the sword and bayonet, the sucking boat and the guillotine. To contemplative men it seemed for a season as if the knell of the whole nation was tolled, and the world summoned to its execution and its funeral." Within the short period of ten years, not less than three millions of human beings are sup-

posed to have perished, in that single country, by the influence of atheism. Were the world to adopt and be governed by the doctrines of revolutionary France, what crimes would not mankind perpetrate? What agonies would they not suffer?[1] Yet republican France has been held up in the present day as an example worthy to be followed in this country!

With regard to the influence of deism on individuals, we may remark that the effects which it produces are perfectly in unison with the principles which its advocates have maintained. In order to accomplish their designs, there is no baseness in hypocrisy to which they have not submitted. Almost all of them have worn a mask of friendship, that they might stab Christianity to the heart; — they have professed a reverence for it, while they were aiming to destroy it. Lord Herbert, Hobbes, Lord Shaftesbury, Woolston, Tindal, Chubb, and Lord Bolingbroke, were all guilty of the vile hypocrisy of lying, while they were employed in no other design than to destroy it. Collins, though he had no belief in Christianity, yet qualified himself for civil office by partaking of the Lord's Supper; and Shaftesbury and others were guilty of the same base hypocrisy. "Such faithless professions, such gross violations of truth in Christians, would have been proclaimed to the universe by these very writers as infamous desertions of principle and decency. Is it less infamous in themselves? All hypocrisy is detestable; but none is so detestable as that which is coolly written with full premeditation, by a man of talents, assuming the character of a moral and religious instructor, a minister, a prophet of the truth of the infinite God. Truth is a virtue perfectly defined, mathematically clear, and completely understood by all men of common sense. There can be no haltings between uttering truth and falsehood, no doubts, no mistakes; as between piety and enthusiasm, frugality and parsimony, generosity and profusion. Transgression, therefore, is always a known, definitive, deliberate villany. In the sudden moment of strong temptation, in the hour of unguarded attack, in the flutter and trepidation of unexpected alarm, the best man may, perhaps, be surprised into any sin; but he who can coolly, of steady design, and with no unusual impulse, utter falsehood, and vent hypocrisy, is not far from finished depravity.

"The morals of Rochester and Wharton need no comment. Woolston was a gross blasphemer. Blount solicited his sister-in-law to marry him, and, being refused, shot himself. Tindal was originally a protestant, then turned papist, then protestant again, merely to suit the times, and was at the same time infamous for vice in general, and the total want of principle. He is said to have died with this prayer in his mouth: 'If there is a God, I desire that he may have mercy on me.' Hobbes wrote his Leviathan to serve the cause of Charles I., but finding him fail of success, he turned it to the defence

[1] The details, on which the above representation is founded, may be seen at length in the Abbé Barruel's Memoirs of Jacobinism; Gifford's Residence in France during the Years 1792—1795, vol. ii., and Adolphus's History of France, vol. ii. Dwight's System of Theology, vol. i. p. 52.

of Cromwell, and made a merit of this fact to the usurper; as Hobbes himself unblushingly declared to Lord Clarendon. Morgan had no regard to truth; as is evident from his numerous falsifications of Scripture, as well as from the vile hypocrisy of professing himself a Christian in those very writings in which he labours to destroy Christianity. Voltaire, in a letter now remaining, requested his friend D'Alembert to tell for him a direct and palpable lie, by denying that he was the author of the Philosophical Dictionary. D'Alembert, in his answer, informed him that he had told the lie. Voltaire has indeed expressed his own moral character perfectly in the following words: 'Monsieur Abbé, I must be read, no matter whether I am believed or not.'"[1] He also solemnly professed to believe the religious tenets of the Romish church, although at the same time he doubted the existence of a God; and at the very moment in which he was plotting the destruction of Christianity, with bended knee and uplifted eye he adored the cross of Christ, and received the host in the communion of the church of Rome. This man was also a shameless adulterer, who, with his abandoned mistress, violated the confidence of his visitors, by opening their letters[2]; and his total want of all principle, moral or religious, — his impudent audacity, — his filthy sensuality, — his persecuting envy, — his base adulation, — his unwearied treachery, — his tyranny, — his cruelty, — his profligacy, and his hypocrisy, will render him for ever the *scorn*, as his unbounded powers will the wonder, of mankind.

The dishonesty, perjury, and gross profligacy of Rousseau, who alternately professed and abjured the Roman Catholic and Protestant religions, without believing either, and who died in the very act of uttering a notorious falsehood to his Creator, — as well as of Paine and other advocates of infidelity, — are too notorious to render it necessary to pollute these pages with the detail of them.

VI. Since then the history and actual condition of mankind in all ages concur to show that a divine revelation is not only possible and probable, but also absolutely necessary to recover them out of their universal corruption and degeneracy, and to make known to them the proper object of their belief and worship, as well as their present duties and future expectations; it remains that we consider THE POSSIBLE MEANS OF COMMUNICATING SUCH REVELATION TO THE WORLD.

There appear to be only two methods by which an extraordinary discovery of the will of God may be made to man: viz. 1. An immediate revelation, by inspiration or otherwise, to every individual of the human race; or else, 2. A commission, accompanied with indisputable credentials, bestowed on some to convince others that they were actually delegated by God, in order to instruct them in those things which he has revealed.

1. But it cannot seem requisite that the Almighty should *immediately inspire, or make a direct revelation to,* EVERY *particular person*

[1] Dwight on Infidelity, pp. 47, 48.
[2] See the publication intituled *Vie Privée de Voltaire et de Madame du Châtelet,* Paris, 1820, 8vo.

in the world; for either he must so powerfully influence the minds and affections of men, as to take away their choice and freedom of acting (which would be to offer violence to human nature); or else men would, for the most part, have continued in their evil courses and practices, and have denied God in their lives; though their understandings were ever so clearly and fully convinced of his will and commandments, as well as of his eternal power and godhead.

But even if God were willing to vouchsafe some immediate revelation of himself to vicious and immoral persons, how can we be assured that they would be converted? Would they not rather find out some pretence to persuade themselves, that it was no *real* revelation, but the effect of natural agents, or of melancholy and a disturbed imagination? They might, perhaps, be terrified for the present; but there is every reason to apprehend, from the known infirmity and depravity of mankind, that such persons would soon stifle their terrors with their accustomed arguments for atheism and infidelity.

Independently, however, of the *inefficacy* of immediate revelation to every man in particular, — supposing it to be thus made, — great and universal confusion would be the result. "It would unhinge our minds; it would break the main-spring of the mental world, and throw it back into the state of moral chaos. It would render uncertain every criterion of right and wrong, of truth and error. It would set aside all those rules by which we learn, and reason, and judge. It would break down every barrier of reason, and let the fancy loose to play her wildest freaks, and indulge her most delirious dreams. It would destroy the freedom as well as the regularity of our minds, and compel an involuntary assent to whatever God might be supposed to dictate;" and, in short, it would fill the world with continual impostures and delusions; for, if every one had a revelation to himself, every one might pretend to others what he pleased; and one man might be deluded by the pretence of a revelation made to another, against an express revelation made to himself. And this, we may conclude, would often happen from what we experience every day; for if men can be perverted by the arts and insinuations of others, against their own reason and judgment, they might as well be prevailed upon to act against a revelation made to them; though revelations should be things as common and familiar among men as reason itself is.

Immediate revelations, therefore, to every particular individual, would have been needless and superfluous; they would have been unsuitable to the majesty and honour of God; they would have been ineffectual to the ends for which they were designed; and would have afforded occasion for many more pretences to impostures than there are now in the world.

2. The only other way by which the divine will can be revealed to mankind, is that which the Scriptures affirm to have actually been employed; viz. the qualifying of certain persons to declare that will to others, by infallible signs and evidences that they are authorised and commissioned by God. What those evidences are, will be discussed in a subsequent page. It is, however, but reasonable to suppose that divine revelations should be committed to writing, in order that they might be preserved for the benefit of mankind, and delivered down genuine and uncorrupted to posterity: for,

(1.) Oral Tradition is so uncertain and so insecure a guide, that if a revelation claiming to be divine be not transmitted by writing, it cannot possibly be preserved in its purity, or serve mankind as a certain rule of faith and of life.

In illustration of this remark, we may observe, that writing is a more secure method of conveyance than tradition, being neither so liable to involuntary mistakes,

through weakness of memory or understanding, nor so subject to voluntary falsifications, suppressions, or additions, either out of malice or design. "It is also a method of conveyance more natural and human. It is nothing extraordinary for a book to be transmitted pure and entire from generation to generation; but a traditionary doctrine, especially if it be of any considerable length, cannot really be preserved without a miracle, without the occasional interposition of Almighty God to renew the memory of it at particular intervals, or his continual assistance and inspiration to keep it always alive and vigorous. It is likewise a method of conveyance more complete and uniform, presenting itself to all at once, and to all alike, to be compared together; whereas a traditionary doctrine must be communicated by little and little, and without doubt communicated differently at different times by different persons. It is, moreover, a method of conveyance more general and diffusive. A man's writings reach further than his words; and surely we need not observe that it is the practice of mankind, whenever they would publish anything, to have it written or printed in a book."[1]

(2.) Further, *experience* shows that writing is a method of conveyance more lasting than tradition.

It is an old and trite observation that a word heard perishes, but a letter written remains.[2] Jesus Christ is said to have performed many other miracles, and to have done many other memorable things, besides those which have been committed to writing[3]; but, observe, how much more faithful record is than mere report; the few, comparatively speaking, which were written, are preserved and credited, while the many, which were not recorded in writing, have long since been utterly lost and forgotten. "Every thing of any consequence we desire to have in writing. By this, laws are promulgated; by this, arts and sciences are propagated; by this, titles and estates are secured. And what do we know of ancient history, but the little that cometh down to us in books and writings? Tradition passeth away like the morning cloud; but books may live as long as the sun and moon endureth."[4]

(3.) To the preceding arguments for the usefulness and expediency of written revelation, arising from the uncertainty of oral tradition, and the greater security and advantages of writing, we may add, that it is certainly more fair and open, more free from suspicion of any fraud or contrivance, to have a religion preserved in writing, there to to be read and examined by all, than to have it left only with a few, to be by them communicated in discourse to others; as no two persons express the same thing exactly in the same manner, nor even the same person at different times.

The heathen philosophers had their *exoteric* and *esoteric* doctrines, as they distinguished them; that is, some which they generally delivered, and others which they communicated only to a few select auditors; but the first propagators of Christianity, knowing no such distinctions, delivered the *whole* doctrine which they professed to have received from God. The heathen priests had their mysteries, which were to be concealed from the profane vulgar; but Christianity can never be made too public. Most other religions also are committed to writing for the use of their particular professors; and it would be a prejudice to the Christian religion if it did not enjoy the same advantage. "The Jews had what they called an oral law, as well as a *written* one; and the one as well as the other they asserted to have been given by God on Mount Sinai — the oral to serve as a comment or explanation of the written law. But in process of time these traditions multiplied so fast, that the Jews found it necessary to keep their traditions no longer as traditions, but committed them to writing; and they are now preserved in the books called

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[1] Bp. Newton's Works, vol. iv. dissert. 2. pp. 19—23. 8vo. edit. The same line of argument, and nearly in similar terms, is stated and illustrated by Archbishop Tillotson, Works, vol. vi. pp. 233. *et seq.* London, 1820. 8vo.

[2] Vox audita perit, littera scripta manet.

[3] John xx. 30. xxi. 25.

[4] Bp. Newton's Works vol. iv. p. 24.

the Talmuds. So fallible is tradition, so much more secure is writing, even in the opinion of the greatest traditionists: and if the doctrines of religion must, one time or other, be written, it is better surely to have them written by inspired authors at first, than by others afterwards."

(4.) Lastly, the importance of the matter, the variety of the subjects, and the design of the institutions, contained in those books, which Jews and Christians account to be sacred, are additional reasons why they should be committed to writing. "The matter is of no less importance than the whole will of God and the salvation of mankind, our duty here and our happiness hereafter; and if anything deserves to be written, do not these things [deserve to be recorded] in the most lasting characters? The subjects likewise are very various, histories of times past and prophecies of things to come, orations and epistles, sublime points of faith and plain rules of practice, hymns and prayers and thanksgivings, all too excellent to be forgotten, but too many all to be remembered. The law was for a single nation; but the Gospel is for the whole world. For a single nation it was requisite that their laws should be written, or to what can they appeal, and by what can they regulate their practice? And if it was necessary for the law to be written, it was certainly much more necessary for the Gospel, which was designed to be both of perpetual and universal obligation, a religion for all ages and for all nations." [1]

The necessity of a divine revelation having been proved, and the probability that such a revelation would be given to mankind having been shown, it remains that we examine the pretensions of the Old and New Testaments to be that revelation. Among the numerous attacks which have been made on the truth of Christianity, one of the most formidable is that which is directed against the authenticity of the Scriptures. It has been asserted that we derive a set of rules and opinions from a series of books, which were not written by the authors to whom we ascribe them; and that the volume to which we give the title of divine, and which is the basis of our faith and manners, is a forgery of later ages. It is therefore of importance to ascertain, first, the genuineness, authenticity, and incorruptness of the several books contained in the Bible, considered simply as compositions; the credibility of their respective authors will next be investigated; and their claims to be received as divinely inspired will then be examined. In discussing these momentous topics, it would perhaps be the shorter way to prove, first, the genuineness, authenticity, incorruptness, and inspiration of the New Testament [2]; for, if its claims to be received as a divinely inspired book be admitted, no reasonable doubt can be entertained of the divine inspiration, &c. of the Old Testament; because the writers of the New Testament incessantly appeal to it, and make ample quotations from

[1] Bp. Newton's Works, vol. iv. p. 28.

[2] This is the method pursued by Bishop Marsh, in his Course of Lectures on the several Branches of Divinity. Part VII. Lectures xxxi.—xxxvii. Cambridge, 1828. 8vo

it. As, however, the modern impugners of revelation have directed their arguments chiefly *against* the Old Testament, in order that, by impeaching its credibility, they may with greater probability of success undermine and invalidate the dispensation revealed in the New Testament, we shall commence with the Old Testament; because, if that be true (the dispensation it contains being introductory to that contained in the New Testament), the latter, being founded on and perfective of the former, must of necessity be true also. By adopting this arrangement, it is possible that some few arguments may be repeated; but the importance of the subjects discussed will (it is hoped) be deemed a satisfactory apology for such unavoidable repetitions.[1]

CHAP. II.

ON THE GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

SECT I.

ON THE GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

I. THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES WHY TERMED THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The books which the Hebrews, Israelites, or Jews have long venerated as divine, are usually called "THE OLD TESTAMENT," in order to distinguish them from those sacred books which contain the doctrines, precepts, and promises of the Christian religion, and which are distinguished by the appellation of "THE NEW TESTAMENT." The appellation of "TESTAMENT" is derived from 2 Cor. iii. 6. 14.; in which place the words ἡ Παλαιὰ Διαθήκη and ἡ Καινὴ Διαθήκη are by the old Latin translators rendered *Antiquum Testamentum* and *Novum Testamentum*, Old and New Testament, instead of *Antiquum Fœdus* and *Novum Fœdus*, the *Old and New Covenant;* for although the Greek word διαθήκη signifies both testament and covenant, yet it uniformly corresponds with the Hebrew word *Berith*, which constantly signifies a covenant.[2] The term "old covenant," used by Saint Paul in 2 Cor. iii. 14., *does not* denote the entire collection of writings which we term the Bible, but those ancient institutions, promises, threatenings, and, in short, the whole of the Mosaic dispensation, related in the Pentateuch, and in the writings of the prophets;

[1] Besides the authorities above cited, the author has been largely indebted for the materials of this Chapter to the Collection of Boyle Lectures in 3 vols. folio (London, 1739); particularly to the Lectures of Bishops Williams and Leng, and of Dr. Samuel Clarke; to Dr. Leland's "Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation shown from the State of Religion in the ancient Heathen World," 3d edition, in 2 vols. 8vo. (Glasgow and London, 1819); and to the same author's masterly "View of the Deistical Writers." The reader, who may not be able to consult these valuable works, will find a well-written "Comparative View of Natural and Revealed Religion," in the second volume of "Christian Essays," by the Rev. S. C. Wilks. London, 1817. 8vo.

[2] Jerome, Comment. in Malachi, ii. 2. Op. tom. iii. p. 1816.

and which in process of time were, by a metonymy, transferred to the books themselves. Thus we find mention made of the *book of the covenant* in Exod. (xxiv. 7.), and in the apocryphal book of Maccabees (1 Macc. i. 57.); and after the example of the apostle, the same mode of designating the sacred writings obtained among the first Christians, from whom it has been transmitted to modern times.[1]

II. Great Importance of the Question, whether the Books contained in the Old Testament are genuine or spurious.

If the books contained in the Old Testament were not written by those authors to whom they are ascribed, or nearly in those ages to which they are supposed to belong, but, on the contrary, were written by authors who lived at a much later period, — that is, if they were *supposititious* or *spurious*, the history which is related in them would by no means be worthy of the great credit that is given to it; the design which pervades these books would have been an imposition upon a later age, and the accomplishment of that design in the New Testament would be altogether an extraordinary and singular occurrence; the miracles, therein recorded to have been anciently performed, would have been the invention of a later age, or natural events would have been metamorphosed into miracles; the prophecies, asserted to be contained in those books, would have been invented *after* the historical facts which are narrated in them; and, lastly, Jesus Christ and his apostles would have approved and recommended the works of impostors. Hence it is evident of what great importance the question is, whether these books are genuine, that is, whether they were written by the persons whose names they bear, and (especially if the author be unknown) about that time which is assigned to them, or at which they profess to have been written; and also, whether they are authentic; that is, whether they relate matters of fact as they really happened, and in consequence possess authority. For a book may be genuine that is not authentic; a book may be authentic that is not genuine; and many are both genuine and authentic which are not inspired. The first epistle of Clement, Bishop of Rome, is genuine, having been written by the author whose name it bears; but it possesses no authority on which we can found any doctrines. "The history of Sir Charles Grandison is genuine, being indeed written by Richardson, the author whose name it bears; but it is not authentic, being a mere effort of that ingenious writer's invention in the production of fictions. Again, the Account of Lord Anson's Voyages is an authentic book, the information being supplied by Lord Anson himself to the author; but it is not genuine, for the real author was Benjamin Robins, the mathematician, and not Walters, whose name is appended to it. Hayley's Memoirs of the Life of Cowper are both genuine and authentic: they were written by Mr. Hayley, and the information

[1] Dr. Lardner has collected several passages from early Christian writers, who thus metonymically use the word "Testament." Works, 8vo. vol. vi. p. 9., 4to. vol. iii. p. 140

they contain was deduced from the best authority."[1] But the poems which bear the name of Rowley are neither genuine nor authentic, not having been written by him, nor by any one who lived in the fifteenth century, but being wholly the productions of the unhappy youth Chatterton, who lived three hundred years afterwards.

III. Genuineness of the Canonical Books of the Old Testament.

The word Canon (from the Greek ΚΑΝΩΝ) "signifies, properly, a reed by which anything is measured. The grammarians of Alexandria denoted thereby the collection of those old Greek writers which they recognised as models; and which they therefore made use of as measures or tests of the grammatical and poetical forms in the Greek language. From them the use of the word *canon* passed to the [early] Christian [writers, usually termed] Fathers, who employed it to indicate the collection of those sacred writings which, [being] acknowledged by the church as authentic, served as a test of belief, and were used in the public service of God."[2] This term has been appropriated ever since the fourth century to the catalogue of writings which are admitted, by Jews and Christians, as a divine rule of faith and manners.[3]

In what age and by what author any book is written is a question of fact, which can only be answered by historical proofs. These historical proofs are,

1. Unexceptionable witnesses, who possessed both the means of knowing, and who were also willing to communicate the truth; and,

2. Certain marks which may be discerned in the subject-matter, diction, genius, and style of the books, and which show that they were written by the authors to whom they are ascribed, or about the age to which they are referred.

The former are termed *external* arguments, and the latter, *internal*; and as these two species of testimony are universally admitted to be sufficient for proving the genuineness of the writings of Thucydides, Plutarch, Cæsar, or Livy, or of any other ancient profane authors, no further testimony ought to be required in the present question.

1. External Proofs of the Genuineness and Authenticity of the Canonical Books of the Old Testament.

(1.) As those who were coeval with each Hebrew writer, and transcribed the book which they received from his own hands, and also delivered their copies to others to be transcribed, certainly knew by whom and at what time such book was published; and as these, having a certain knowledge of the author and of the age in which he lived, delivered such book to their immediate descendants, and these again to their posterity, and so from one generation to another through

[1] Dr. O. Gregory's Letters on the Evidences, &c. of the Christian Religion, vol. i. p. 84. 2d edit.

[2] Schumann's Introduction to the Books of the Old and New Testament, p. 17. London, 1849, 8vo.

[3] Suiceri Thesaurus, tom. ii. p. 40. voce Κανων. The Rev. B. F. Westcott has an instructive "History of the word Κανων," in his General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament, pp. 541—549. Cambridge, 1855. 8vo.

all succeeding ages,—all these persons jointly testify that such book is the genuine production of the author whose name it bears, and of the age in which he lived.

(2.) The books, thus transmitted from one generation to another (especially in that very remote age when the first books of the Old Testament were written), could not but remain, both more easily as well as more certainly, uncorrupted, and be propagated with fidelity, because at that time there were but few books, and also because the tradition relative to their origin was most easily recollected. And as this tradition (which was not communicated in the schools to their pupils by learned men, whose various conjectures sometimes obscure truth, but in private houses by fathers to their children [1]), was approved, many of the authors therefore did not subscribe to their works either their names, or the age in which they lived; but where any of them did annex their names to their writings, nothing further was requisite than faithfully to transcribe such notification,—a task which could be performed with the utmost facility.

(3.) In fact, there was no motive to induce the Hebrews to corrupt this very simple tradition; on the contrary, as these books were held in the highest reverence and estimation by much the greater part of that people, they had the most powerful motives for transmitting the origin of these documents faithfully to their posterity. If, indeed, the Hebrew nation had been disposed to betray the trust confided to them, a motive would not have been wanting to them for propagating falsehoods respecting their books, because these contain such repeated —we may almost add such incessant—reproofs and censures of them, as an unteachable, intractable, and headstrong people, as place their character in an unfavourable point of view. But notwithstanding, if that people testify that these books are genuine, they become witnesses against themselves, and consequently their testimony is unexceptionable. This argument also tends to exclude the hypothesis that the histories have been inserted in a later age.

In illustration of this remark, we may observe that the character of the Jews is a strong proof that they have not forged the Old Testament. Were a person brought before a court of justice on a suspicion of forgery, and yet no presumptive or positive evidence of his guilt could be produced, it would be allowed by all that he ought to be acquitted. But if the forgery alleged were inconsistent with the character of the accused; if it tended to expose to disgrace his general principles and conduct; or if we were assured that he considered forgery as an impious and abominable crime, it would require very strong testimony to establish his guilt. This case corresponds exactly with the situation of the Jews. If a Jew had forged any book of the Old Testament, he must have been impelled to so bold and dangerous an enterprise by some very powerful motive. It could not be national pride, for there is scarcely one of these books which does not severely censure the national manners. It could not be the love of fame, for that passion would have taught him to flatter and extol the national

[1] Compare Deut. xxxii. 7, 8. and Psal. lxxviii. 3—7.

character; and the punishment, if detected, would have been infamy and death. The love of wealth could not produce such a forgery, for no wealth was to be gained by it.[1]

. (4.) The true knowledge of the origin of these books could not be easily corrupted or lost, because a particular tribe among the Hebrews was set apart from the rest, and consecrated, among other things, for the express purpose of watching over the preservation of these historical documents; and further, there were never wanting men belonging to the other tribes, both at that time and also during the Babylonian captivity (for instance, those who in more ancient times were the governors of the Hebrew republic, and were called, first, judges, and afterwards prophets),—by whom these books were held in the highest reverence, because they were themselves descended from that very age, and from these very authors. Although the names of some of these authors, and also the age in which they lived, are lost in oblivion, yet, as the Jews confess their ignorance, such confession is an evidence that they would not have testified it, if they had not received it as certain from their ancestors. In the meantime, the age at least of these anonymous books has not so entirely been neglected, but that we have the clearest evidence that not one of them was written later than the *fifth* century *before* the Christian æra.

(5.) The Old Testament, according to our Bibles, comprises thirty-nine books, viz. the Pentateuch or five books of Moses, called Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; the books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes; the Song of Solomon; the Prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, with his Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. But, among the ancient Jews, they formed only twenty-two books[2], according to the letters of their alphabet, which were twenty-two in number; reckoning Judges and Ruth, Ezra and Nehemiah, Jeremiah and his Lamentations, and the twelve minor Prophets (so called from the comparative brevity of their compositions), respectively as one book. It is not necessary here to enter into a minute inquiry concerning the authors of these books[3]; but we may state generally that the Pentateuch consists of the writings of Moses delivered by him to his contemporaries, with (as some imagine) a few additions; that the book of Joshua was compiled, probably before the reign of David, from ancient, authentic, and contemporary documents, some, it may be, by Joshua himself; that the book of Judges was written in part during the administration of Samuel, (possibly by that prophet) in part early in the monarchy; Ruth in David's time; the books of Samuel, it is likely, about the reign of Rehoboam, that the books of Kings were compiled during the captivity, from authentic documents, which are perpetually

[1] Ency. Brit. vol. xvii. p. 107. art. Scripture, 3d edit.

[2] Josephus contr. Apion. lib. i. § 8. Origen's Philocalia, cited in Eusebius's Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c 25.

[3] This subject is discussed *infrà*, Vol. II. in the critical prefaces to each book.

referred to, the work of successive prophets; the books of Chronicles under the Persian dominion from similar records; that the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are collections partly written by the persons whose names they bear; that the book of Esther was compiled by a contemporary, perhaps from the Persian annals; that the book of Job was written by some author whom it is impossible to identify, perhaps during the Hebrew monarchy, or as many believe much earlier; the Psalms, by David, Asaph, and other pious persons; the books of Proverbs, the Canticles, and Ecclesiastes, most likely by Solomon; and the Prophetical Books, by the Prophets whose names they bear.

Let us now consider the evidence of testimony for the authenticity of the books of the Old Testament. As the Jews were a more ancient people than the Greeks or Romans, and were for many ages totally unconnected with them, it is not to be expected that we should derive much evidence from the historians of those nations; it is to the Jews principally that we must look for information.[1] The uniform belief, indeed, of all Christians, from the very commencement of Christianity to the present time, has considered the books above enumerated to have constituted the whole of the Old Testament; and the catalogues of them, which were formed by the author of the Synopsis attributed to Athanasius [2], by Epiphanius [3], and Jerome [4] (towards the close of the fourth century), by Origen [5] (in the middle of the third century), and Melito Bishop of Sardis [6] (towards the close of the second century), all agree with the above enumeration. To these we may add the testimonies of the Greek translators of the Old Testament, who lived about 280 or 282 years before the Christian æra; Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus, who lived towards the close of the second century; and that of the Peschito or old Syriac version, executed very early in the second, if not at the close of the first century, of the Christian æra. Here the Jewish testimonies join us. Not to enter into any minute details concerning the several Targums or Chaldee paraphrases on various parts of the Old Testament, which were compiled between the first and seventh centuries of the Christian æra, nor the Jerusalem and Babylonish Talmuds or Commentaries upon the Misna or Traditions of the Jews,—PHILO, an Egyptian Jew[7] (who lived in the *first* century of the Christian æra), quoted as having canonical authority, no other books than those which

[1] The Emperor Julian, inveterate as was his enmity to Christianity, has borne explicit and important testimony to the authenticity and integrity of the Old Testament. See Herwerden, de Juliano Imperatore, pp. 100, 101. 103—108. Lug. Bat. 1827. 8vo.

[2] Athanasii Opera, tom. ii. pp. 126—204. Dr. Lardner has given the most material extracts from this synopsis, respecting the canon of Scripture. Works, 8vo. vol. iv. pp. 290, 291.; 4to. vol. ii. p. 404.

[3] Hæres. xxix. Op. tom. i. pp. 122. *et seq.*

[4] In his Prologus Galeatus and Epist. ad Paulinum.

[5] Op. tom. ii. p. 529., and in Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c. 25.

[6] Apud Eusebium, Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c. 26.

[7] De Vita Mosis, lib. ii. The passages of Philo here referred to, and also the other testimonies above cited, are given at full length (with some additional evidences from Christian writers) by Schmidius, in his elaborate Historia Antiqua et Vindicatio Canonis Sacri Veteris et Novi Testamenti, pp. 129—189. 8vo. Lipsiæ. 1775.

are contained in the Hebrew Bible, and which alone were acknowledged by the Jews of Palestine.

Philo, it is true, in none of his writings, gives an *express* notice of the canon of the Old Testament; but in very numerous scattered passages he has indicated his own opinion, and probably also the opinion of his contemporaries concerning the merit and importance of each of the books which formed part of that canon. Dr. Hornemann [1], who carefully read and examined all Philo's works, for the sole purpose of ascertaining his opinion on the canon of the Old Testament, divides the books of the Old Testament, according to Philo's expressions, into three classes, viz. 1. *Books cited with the express remark that they are of divine origin:* in this class are found the Pentateuch, the book of Joshua, the first book of Samuel, Ezra, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Zechariah, the Psalms, and the Proverbs. 2. *Books of which Philo makes only casual mention, without any notice of their divine origin:* this class contains the book of Judges, Job, the first book of Kings, and several detached Psalms. 3. *Books not mentioned by Philo,* viz. Nehemiah, Ruth, Esther, the two books of Chronicles, Daniel, the Lamentations of Jeremiah, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

To the books, to which Philo expressly ascribes a divine origin, we must probably add the second book of Samuel and the two books of Kings, these three books forming only *one* with the first book of Samuel, which Philo calls divine. Of the twelve minor prophets, he cites only two as inspired; and it is certain that the twelve formed only one book. As he never quotes the apocryphal books (which he certainly would have done, had they been accounted canonical at Alexandria in the apostolic age), we may therefore place all the books of the Old Testament, which he expressly quotes, into *one* class, viz. that of the books which he accounted sacred; and this class, according to the preceding observations, is composed of the five books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, Ezra, Isaiah, Jeremiah, the twelve minor prophets, the Psalms, Proverbs, and Job. The other books may have formed part of the canon of the Egyptian Jews. Ruth was an appendix to the book of Judges; Nehemiah to the second part of Ezra; and the Lamentations of Jeremiah might be joined to his prophecies. But the silence of Philo concerning any book proves nothing against its canonical authority, if it be not contradicted or overturned by other positive proofs.[2]

We now proceed to a testimony, which, though concise, is more important than any of the preceding, the testimony of JOSEPHUS, a Jewish priest, who was born about the year 37 of the Christian æra, and, though much younger than the apostles of Jesus Christ, must have been contemporary with them. Following the enumeration above accounted for, he says, in his treatise against Apion [3],

[1] C. F. Hornemann, Observationes ad Illustrationem Doctrinæ de Canone Veteris Testamenti ex Philone. Hauniæ, 1778. 8vo.

[2] Mélanges de Religion, &c. tom ix. pp. 188—191. Nismes, 1824. 8vo.

[3] Lib. i. § 8. tom. ii. p. 441. ed. Havercamp.

"We have not thousands of books, discordant, and contradicting each other; but we have only *twenty-two*, which comprehend the history of all former ages, and are justly regarded as divine. *Five* of them proceed from Moses; they include as well the *Laws* as an account of the creation of man, extending to the time of his (Moses's) death. This period comprehends nearly three thousand years. From the death of Moses to that of Artaxerxes, who was king of Persia after Xerxes, the *Prophets*, who succeeded Moses, committed to writing, in thirteen books, what was done in their days. The remaining four books contain *Hymns* to God (the Psalms) and instructions of life for man."[1]

The threefold division of the Old Testament into the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, mentioned by Josephus, was expressly recognised before his time by JESUS CHRIST, as well as by the subsequent writers of the New Testament.

Jesus Christ "was a constant attendant at the worship of the synagogue, and he took part in the public reading and exposition of the sacred books of the Jews: thus he gave a practical testimony and personal sanction to the tenets of the Jews concerning those books. He received, as divinely inspired Scripture, what the Jews received and delivered to him as such. He affirmed those books to be written by the Holy Ghost (Mark xii. 36.); and claimed to be received as the Messiah on the authority of their prophecies. (John v. 46., Luke xxiv. 27. 44.) He frequently called those books "*the Scriptures.*" He commanded the Jews to *search their Scriptures.* (John v. 39.) He said, *It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.* (Luke xvi. 17.) And again, *Verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle* (that is, one *yod*, the smallest letter, and one point of a letter), *shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.* (Matt. v. 18.). And again, *The Scripture cannot be broken.* (John x. 35.) He declared that the Sadducees erred, by not understanding the Scriptures. (Matt. xxii. 29.) *They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them.* (Luke xvi. 29.) He defined the prophetical age between the limits of Abel and Zacharias. (Matt. xxiii. 35.) In his walk with his two disciples to Emmaus after his resurrection, *beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.* (Luke xxiv. 27.) He said to his apostles:—*These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.* (Luke xxiv. 44.) (He here refers to the threefold division of the Scriptures among the Jews, the Law, the Prophets, and the Cetubim, or Hagiographa, which together made "*all* the Scriptures.") . . . . And, therefore, the writings of Moses, and all the Prophets, and the Psalms,—that is, all the books received by the Jews under these names, were *all the Scriptures* to Christ."[2]

[1] On the canon of Jewish Scripture according to the testimonies of Philo and Josephus, see further, Bp. Marsh's Divinity Lect. Part vii. Lectures xxxiii. and xxxiv. pp. 17—50.

[2] Wordsworth's Lectures on the Inspiration of Holy Scripture, pp. 51, 52.

"What Christ did, his apostles . . . did likewise. They affirm that the Scriptures *came not by the will of man*, but that they who wrote them *spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* (2 Pet. i. 21.) *God . . . at sundry times and divers places spake unto the Fathers, by the Prophets.* (Heb. i. 1.) They recognise the Scriptures as in the hands of the Jews. The great advantage of the Jews, says the apostle, is, that to them were *committed the oracles of God.* (Rom. iii. 1, 2.) What, therefore, was committed to them, was God's Word; and what was not committed to the Jews, in St. Paul's judgment, was no Oracle of God. Again, to the Israelites, he says, pertaineth *the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the promises.* What therefore did not pertain to them was no part of the sacred deposit of divine truth. Accordingly, the apostles never quote any of the apocryphal books as the Word of God."[1]

An examination of the Table of Quotations from the Old Testament in the New, which is given in Vol. II. pp. 113—177., will furnish abundant evidence that the Jewish Canon, in the time of Jesus Christ and his apostles, contained the same books which now constitute the Old Testament; and if it be only allowed that Jesus Christ was a person of a virtuous and irreproachable character, it must be acknowledged that we draw a fair conclusion, when we assert that the Scriptures were not corrupted in his time; for, when he accused the Pharisees of making the law of no effect by their traditions, and when he enjoined his hearers to search the Scriptures, he could not have failed to mention the corruptions or forgeries of Scripture, if any had existed in that age.

We have, however, unquestionable testimony of the genuineness of the Old Testament, in the *fact* that its canon was fixed some centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ. Jesus the son of Sirach, author of the book of Ecclesiasticus, makes evident references to the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and mentions these prophets by name; he speaks also of the twelve minor prophets. It likewise appears from the prologue to that book, that the law and the prophets, and other ancient books, were extant at the same period. The book of Ecclesiasticus, according to the best chronologers, was written in the Syro-Chaldaic dialect, about A. M. 3772, that is, *two hundred and thirty-two* years before the Christian æra, and was translated by the grandson of Jesus into Greek, for the use of the Alexandrian Jews. The prologue was added by the translator, but this circumstance does not diminish the evidence for the antiquity of the Old Testament; for he informs us, that the Law and the Prophets, and the other books of their fathers, were studied by his grandfather; a sufficient proof that they were extant in his time.

(6.) Fifty years, indeed, before the age of the author of Ecclesiasticus, or *two hundred and eighty* or *eighty-two* years before the Christian æra, the Greek version of the Old Testament, usually called the Septuagint, was executed at Alexandria, the books of which are the same as in our Bibles; whence it is evident that we still have those

[1] Wordsworth's Lectures on the Inspiration of Holy Scripture, p. 54.

identical books, which the most ancient Jews attested to be genuine, — a benefit this which has not happened to any ancient profane books whatever. Indeed, as no authentic books of a more ancient date, except those of the Old Testament, are extant, it is impossible to ascend higher in search of testimony. The evidence, indeed, which we have adduced, is not merely that of the more modern Jews; — it is also that of the most ancient, as is manifest from this circumstance, that the latter of these books always recognise others as known to be more ancient, and almost everywhere cite them by name; whence it is evident that those ancient authors long since received testimony from their ancestors, that those more ancient books were the genuine works of the authors whose names they bear.

Strong — we may add indisputable — as this external evidence of the genuineness of the Old Testament unquestionably is,

2. THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE ARISING FROM THE CONSIDERATION OF THE LANGUAGE, STYLE, MANNER OF WRITING, AND ALSO FROM THE CIRCUMSTANTIALITY OF THE NARRATIVES CONTAINED IN THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, is an equally decisive and incontestable argument for their genuineness, and also to show that they were not and could not be invented by one impostor, or by several contemporary impostors, or by several successive impostors.

(1.) *The Language, Style, and Manner of Writing, used in the books of the Old Testament, are internal arguments of their genuineness; and prove not only that they must have been written by different persons, but also enable us with precision to ascertain a time, at or before which they must have been composed.*[1]

The Hebrew language, in which the Old Testament was written, being the language of an ancient people that had little intercourse with their neighbours, and whose neighbours also spoke a language which had great affinity with their own, would not change so rapidly as modern languages have done, since nations have been variously intermingled, and since arts, sciences, and commerce have been so greatly extended. Yet, since no language continues stationary, there must necessarily be some changes in the period of time that elapsed between Moses and Malachi.[2] If, therefore, on comparing the different parts of the Hebrew Bible, the character and style of the language are found to differ (which critical Hebrew scholars have proved to be the case), we have strong internal criteria that the different books of the Old Testament were composed at different and distant periods; and consequently a considerable argument may thence be deduced in favour of their genuineness. Further, the books of the Old Testament have too considerable a diversity of style to be the work either of one Jew (for a *Jew* he must have been, on account of the language), or of any set of contemporary Jews. If, therefore, they

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[1] For this view of the internal evidence of the genuineness of the Old Testament, the author is chiefly indebted to the observations of the profound and ingenious philosopher David Hartley (on Man, vol. ii. pp. 97—104.), and of the learned and accurate professor Jahn (Introductio in Libros Sacros Veteris Fœderis, pp. 18—28.)

[2] The departure of the Israelites from Egypt, under the direction of Moses, took place in the year of the world 2513, or before Christ 1491. Malachi delivered his predictions under Nehemiah's second government of Judea, between the years 436 and 420 before the Christian æra. The interval of time, therefore, that elapsed between them is between 1071 and 1055 years; or, if we reckon from the death of Moses (A.M. 2555) B.C. 1451, it is from 1015 to 1031 years.

be all forgeries, there must have been a succession of impostors in different ages, who have concurred to impose upon posterity, which is inconceivable. To suppose part to be forged, and part to be genuine, is very harsh; neither would this supposition, if admitted, be satisfactory.

Again, the Hebrew language ceased to be spoken as a living language soon after the Babylonish captivity; but it would be difficult or impossible to forge any thing in it *after* it was become a dead language. All the books of the Old Testament must, therefore, be nearly as ancient as the Babylonish captivity; and since they could not all be written in the same age, some must be considerably more ancient, which would bring us back again to a succession of conspiring impostors. Lastly, the simplicity of style and unaffected manner of writing which pervade all the books of the Old Testament (with the exception of such parts as are poetical and prophetical), are a very strong evidence of their genuineness, even exclusively of the suitableness of this circumstance to the times of the supposed authors. Not one of these criteria is applicable to the books which in some editions are attached to the Old Testament under the title of the Apocrypha; for they never were extant in Hebrew, neither are they quoted in the New Testament, or by the Jewish writers, Philo and Josephus; on the contrary, they contain many things which are fabulous, false, and contradictory to the canonical Scriptures.[1]

(2.) *The very great number of particular Circumstances of Time, Place, Persons, &c. mentioned in the books of the Old Testament, is another argument both of their genuineness and authenticity.*

A statement of the principal heads, under which these particular circumstances may be classed, will enable the reader fully to apprehend the force of this internal evidence.

There are, then, mentioned in the book of *Genesis*, the rivers of Paradise, the generations of the antediluvian patriarchs, the deluge with its circumstances, the place where the ark rested, the building of the tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues, the dispersion of mankind, or the division of the earth amongst the posterity of Shem, Ham, and Japhet, the generations of the post-diluvian patriarchs, with the gradual shortening of human life after the flood, the sojournings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with many particulars of the state of Canaan and the neighbouring countries in their times, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the state of the land of Edom, both before and after Esau's time, and the descent of Jacob into Egypt, with the state of Egypt before Moses's time. — In fine, we have in this book the infancy and youth of the human race, together with the gradual and successive progress of civilisation and society, delineated with singular minuteness and accuracy.

In the book of *Exodus* are recorded the plagues of Egypt, the institution of the passover, the passage through the Red Sea, with the destruction of Pharaoh and his host there, the miracle of manna, the victory over the Amalekites, the solemn delivery of the law from Mount Sinai, many particular laws both moral and ceremonial, the worship of the golden calf, and a very minute description of the tabernacle, priests' garments, ark, &c. — In *Leviticus* we have a collection of ceremonial laws, with all their particularities, and an account of the deaths of Nadab and Abihu. — The book of *Numbers* contains the first and second numberings of the several tribes, with their genealogies, the peculiar offices of the three several families of the Levites, many ceremonial laws, the journeyings and encampments of the people in the wilderness during forty years, with the relation of some remarkable events which happened in this period; as the searching of the land, the rebellion of Korah, the victories over Arad, Sihon, and Og, with the division of the kingdoms of the two last among the Gadites, Reubenites, and Manassites, the history of Balak and Balaam, and the victory over the Midianites; all of which are described with the several particularities of time, place, and persons. — The book of *Deuteronomy* contains a recapitulation of many things comprised in the three last books,

[1] The arguments against the genuineness of the apocryphal books, which are here necessarily touched with brevity, will be found discussed at length *infrà*, in the Appendix to this Volume, No. I. Section I.

with the second delivery of the law, chiefly the moral one, by Moses, upon the borders of Canaan, just before his death.

In the book of *Joshua*, we have the passage over Jordan, the conquest of the land of Canaan in detail, and the division of it among the tribes, including a minute geographical description. — The book of *Judges* recites a great variety of public transactions, with the private origin of some. In all, the names of times, places, and persons, both among the Israelites and the neighbouring nations, are noted with particularity and simplicity. — In the book of *Ruth* is a very particular account of the genealogy of David, with several incidental circumstances. —The books of *Samuel*, *Kings*, *Chronicles*, *Ezra*, and *Nehemiah*, contain the transactions of the kings before the captivity, and governors afterwards, all delivered in the same circumstantial manner. And here the particular account of the regulations, sacred and civil, established by David, and of the building of the temple by Solomon, the genealogies given in the beginning of the first book of Chronicles, and the lists of the persons who returned, sealed, &c. after the captivity, in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, deserve especial notice, in the light in which we are now considering things. — The book of *Esther* contains a like account of a very remarkable event, with the institution of a festival in memory of it.

The book of *Psalms* mentions many historical facts in an incidental way; and this, with the books of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, alludes to the manners and customs of ancient times in various ways. In the *Prophecies* there are some historical relations; and in the other parts the indirect mention of facts, times, places, and persons, is interwoven with the predictions in the most copious and circumstantial manner.

From the preceding statements, we may observe, *First*, that, in fact, we do not ever find that forged or false accounts of things superabound thus in particularities. There is always some truth where there are considerable particularities related, and they always seem to bear some proportion to one another. Thus there is a great want of the particulars of time, place, and persons in Manetho's account of the Egyptian dynasties, Ctesias's of the Assyrian kings, and those which the technical chronologers have given of the ancient kingdoms of Greece; and, agreeably thereto, these accounts have much fiction and falsehood, with some truth: whereas Thucydides's history of the Peloponnesian war, and Cæsar's of the war in Gaul, in both which the particulars of time, place, and persons are mentioned, are universally esteemed true, to a great degree of exactness. — *Secondly*, a forger, or a relater of falsehoods, would be careful not to mention so great a number of particulars, since this would be to put into his reader's hands criteria whereby to detect him. Thus we may see one reason of the fact just mentioned, and which, in confirming that fact, confirms the proposition here to be proved. — *Thirdly*, a forger, or a relater of falsehoods, could scarcely furnish such lists of particulars. It is easy to conceive how faithful records kept from time to time by persons concerned in the transactions should contain such lists; nay, it is natural to expect them in this case, from that local memory which takes strong possession of the fancy in those who have been present at transactions; but it would be a work of the highest invention and greatest stretch of genius to raise from nothing such numberless particularities as are almost every where to be met with in the Scriptures. — *Fourthly*, if we could suppose the persons who forged the books of the Old and New Testaments to have furnished their readers with the great variety of particulars above mentioned, notwithstanding the two reasons here alleged against it, we cannot, however, conceive but that the persons of those times when the books were published must, by the help of these criteria, have detected and exposed the forgeries or falsehoods. For these criteria are so attested by allowed facts, as at this time, and in this remote corner of the world, to establish the truth and genuineness of the Scriptures, as may appear even from this chapter, and much more from the writings of commentators, sacred critics, and such other learned men as have given the historical evidences for revealed religion in detail; and, by parity of reason, they would suffice even now to detect the fraud, were there any: whence we may conclude, *à fortiori*, that they must have enabled the persons who were upon the spot, when the books were published, to do this; and the importance of many of the particulars recorded, as well as of many of the precepts, observances, and renunciations enjoined, would furnish them with abundant motives for this purpose.

Upon the whole, therefore, we conclude, that the very great number of particulars of time, place, persons, &c. mentioned in the Old Testament, is a proof of its genuineness and truth, even independently of the consideration of the agreement of these particulars with history, both natural and civil, and with one another; which agreement will be discussed in the following chapter[1] as a confirmation of the credibility of the writers of the Old Testament.

IV. Notwithstanding the conclusiveness of the preceding arguments for the genuineness of the Old Testament *collectively*, attempts have been made of late years to impugn it, by undermining the genuineness and antiquity of *particular* books, especially of the Pentateuch, or five books which are ascribed to Moses; for, as the four last of these books are the basis of the Jewish dispensation, which was introductory to Christianity, if the Pentateuch *could* be proved to be neither geniune nor authentic, the genuineness and authenticity of the other books of the Old Testament, in consequence of their mutual and immediate dependence upon each other, must necessarily fall.

That the Pentateuch was written by the great legislator of the Hebrews, by whom it was addressed to his contemporaries, and consequently was not, nor could be, the production of later times, we are authorised to affirm from a series of testimonies, which, whether we consider them together or separately, form such a body of evidence as can be adduced for the productions of no ancient profane writers whatever; for let it be considered what are the marks and characters, both internal and external, which prove the genuineness and authenticity of the works of any ancient author, and the same arguments may be urged with equal, if not with greater force, in favour of the writings of Moses.

1. *The LANGUAGE in which the Pentateuch is written is a proof of its genuineness and authenticity.*

"It is an undeniable fact that Hebrew ceased to be the living language of the Jews soon after the Babylonish captivity, and that the Jewish productions after that period were in general either Chaldee or Greek. The Jews of Palestine, some ages before the appearance of our Saviour, were unable to comprehend the Hebrew original without the assistance of a Chaldee paraphrase; and it was necessary to undertake a Greek translation, because that language alone was known to the Jews of Alexandria. It necessarily follows, therefore, that every book which is written in *pure* Hebrew, was composed either before or about the time of the Babylonish captivity.[2] This being admitted, we may advance a step further, and contend, that the period which elapsed between the composition of the most ancient and the most modern book of the Old Testament was very considerable; or, in other words, that the most ancient books of the Old Testament were written a length of ages prior to the Babylonish captivity. No language continues during many centuries in the same state of cultivation, and the Hebrew, like other tongues, passed through the several stages of infancy, youth, manhood, and old age. If, therefore (as we have already remarked), on comparison, the several parts of the Hebrew Bible are found to differ, not only in regard to style, but also in regard to character and cultivation of language; if one discovers the golden, another the silver, a third

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[1] See Chapter III. Section II. and Chapter V. Section II., *infrà*.

[2] See Doederlein Institutio Theologi Christiani, sect. 38. tom. i. p. 105. Norimbergæ, 1778.

a brazen, a fourth the iron age, we have strong internal marks of their having been composed at different and distant periods. No classical scholar, independently of the Grecian history, would believe that the poems ascribed to Homer were written in the age of Demosthenes, the orations of Demosthenes in the time of Origen, or the commentaries of Origen in the days of Lascaris and Chrysoloras. For the very same reason it is certain that the five books, which are ascribed to Moses, were not written in the time of David, the Psalms of David in the age of Isaiah, nor the prophecies of Isaiah in the time of Malachi. But it appears, from what has been said above in regard to the extinction of the Hebrew language, that the book of Malachi could not have been written much later than the Babylonish captivity; before that period, therefore, were written the prophecies of Isaiah, still earlier the Psalms of David, and much earlier than these the books which are ascribed to Moses. There is no presumption, therefore, whatsoever, *à priori*, that Moses was not the author or compiler of the Pentateuch."[1] And the ignorance of the assertion which in our time has been made, — that the Hebrew language is a compound of the Syriac, Arabic, and Chaldee languages, and a distortion of each of them with other provincial dialects and languages that were spoken by adjoining nations, by whom the Jews had at various times been subdued and led captive, — is only surpassed by its falsehood and its absurdity.

2. But further, *the four last books of Moses contain* "*a system of* CEREMONIAL *and* MORAL LAWS, *which, unless we reject the authority of* all *history, were observed by the Israelites from the time of their departure out of Egypt till their dispersion at the taking of Jerusalem.*

"These LAWS, therefore, are as ancient as the conquest of Palestine. It is also an undeniable historical fact that the Jews in every age believed that their ancestors had received them from the hand of Moses, and that these laws were the bases of their political and religious institutions, as long as they continued to be a people."[2] Things of *private* concern may easily be counterfeited, but not the laws and constitution of a whole country. It would, indeed, have been impossible to forge the civil and religious code of the Jews without detection; for their civil and religious polity are so blended and interwoven together, that the one cannot be separated from the other. They must, therefore, have been established at the same time, and derived from the same original; and both together evince the impossibility of any forgery more than either of them could singly. The religion and government of a people cannot be new modelled. Further, many of the institutions, contained in the ceremonial and moral laws given to the Jews by Moses, were so burthensome, and some of them (humanly speaking) were so hazardous, or rather so certainly ruinous to any nation not secured by an extraordinary providence correspondent to them—especially those relating to the sabbatical year, the resort of all the males to Jerusalem annually at the three great festivals, and the prohibition of cavalry — that forged books containing such precepts would have been rejected with the utmost abhorrence. As the whole Jewish people were made the depositaries and keepers of their laws, it is impossible to conceive that any nation, with such motives to reject, and such opportunities of detecting the forgery of the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, should yet receive them, and submit to the heavy yoke imposed by the laws contained in them. That they should often throw it off in part, and for a time, and rebel against the divine authority of their law, though sufficiently evidenced, is easily to be accounted for, from what we see and feel in ourselves and others every day; but that they should return and repent and submit to it, unless it were really delivered by Moses, and had the sanction of divine authority, is utterly incredible. "We are therefore reduced to this dilemma, to acknowledge either that these laws were actually delivered by Moses, or that a whole nation during fifteen hundred years groaned under the weight of an imposture, without once detecting or even suspecting the fraud. The Athenians believed that the system of laws by which they were governed was composed by Solon; and

[1] Bishop Marsh's Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses vindicated, pp. 6, 7

[2] Ibid. p. 7.

the Spartans attributed their code to Lycurgus, without ever being suspected of a mistake in their belief. Why, then, should it be doubted that the rules prescribed in the Pentateuch were given by Moses? To deny it, is to assert that an effect may exist without a cause, or that a great and important revolution may take place without an agent. We have, therefore, an argument little short of mathematical demonstration, that the *substance* of the Pentateuch proceeded from Moses; and that the very *words* were written by him, though not so mathematically demonstrable as the former, is at least a moral certainty. The Jews, whose evidence alone can decide in the present instance, have believed it from the earliest to the present age; no other person ever aspired to be thought the author, and we may venture to affirm that no other person could have been the author. For it is wholly incredible that the Jews, though weak and superstitious, would have received, in a later age, a set of writings as the genuine work of Moses, if no history and no tradition had preserved the remembrance of his having been the author." [1]

3. *The united* HISTORICAL TESTIMONY *of Jews and Gentiles attests the genuineness and authenticity of the Pentateuch.*

Although the spirit of ancient simplicity, which breathes throughout these books, renders it improbable that they were fabricated in a later age; yet, when we add to this the universal consent of those persons who were most concerned, and best able, to ascertain the point in question, we have an additional testimony in favour of the genuineness and authenticity of the Pentateuch.

[i.] *With regard to Jewish Testimony:—*

If we believe other nations, when they attest the antiquity and specify the authors of their laws, no just reason can be assigned why we should not give equal credit to the JEWS, whose testimony is surely as much deserving of credit as that of the Athenians, the Lacedemonians, the Romans, and the Persians, concerning Solon, Lycurgus, Numa, and Zoroaster [2]; or rather, from the facts we shall proceed to state, they are better entitled to belief than any other nation under heaven. "Every book of the Old Testament implies the previous existence of the Pentateuch: in many of them it is expressly mentioned, allusion is made to it in some, and it is quoted in others. These contain a series of external evidence in its favour, which is hardly to be confuted; and when the several links of this argument are put together, they will form a chain, which it would require more than ordinary abilities to break. In the first place, no one will deny that the Pentateuch existed in the time of Christ and his apostles, for they not only mention it, but quote it.[3] 'This we admit,' reply the advocates for the hypothesis which it is our object to confute, 'but you cannot therefore conclude that Moses was the author, for there is reason to believe that it was composed by Ezra.' Now, unfortunately for men of this persuasion, Ezra himself is evidence against them; for, instead of assuming to himself the honour which they so liberally confer on him, he expressly ascribes the book of the law to Moses; 'and they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is in Jerusalem, as it is written *in the book of Moses.*' [4] Further, the Pentateuch existed before the

[1] Bishop Marsh's Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses vindicated, pp. 7, 8. See also Dr. Gleig's edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible, vol. i. pp. xiv.—xix. The following articles of the Jewish Confession of Faith sufficiently attest how firmly the Jews believe the Pentateuch to be the work of Moses.

7. I firmly believe that all the prophecies of Moses our master (God rest his soul in peace!) are true; and that he is the father of all the sages, whether they went before or came after him.

8. *I firmly believe that the law which we have now in our hands was given by Moses;* God rest his soul in peace! — Lamy's Apparatus Biblicus, vol. i. pp. 245, 246.

[2] Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ, book ii. c. i. § vi. vii.

[3] Matt. v. 27.; Mark x. 3., xii. 26.; Luke x. 25., xxiv. 44.; John vii. 19., viii. 5.; Acts xxviii. 23.; 1 Cor. ix. 9.; 2 Cor. iii. 15.

[4] Ezra vi. 18. See also Ezra iii. 2. and Nehemiah xiii. 1. *The law of Moses*, the servant of God, is expressly mentioned by Malachi, the contemporary of Ezra. See Mal.

time of Ezra, for it is expressly mentioned during the captivity in Babylon by Daniel (ix. 11—13.) B. C. 537 or 538. Long before that event, it was extant in the time of Josiah (2 Chron. xxxiv. 15.) B. C. 624, and was then of such acknowledged authority, that the perusal of it occasioned an immediate reformation of the religious usages, which had not been observed according to the "word of the Lord, to do after all that is written in this book." (2 Chron. xxxiv. 21.) It was extant in the time Hoshea king of Israel, B. C. 678, since a captive Israelitish priest was sent back from Babylon (2 Kings xvii. 27.) to instruct the new colonists of Samaria in the religion which it teaches. By these Samaritans the book of the law was received as genuine, and was preserved and handed down to their posterity, as it also was by the Jews, as the basis of the civil and religious institutions of both nations.[1] It was extant in the time of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, B. C. 912 (2 Chron xvii. 9.), who employed public instructors for its promulgation. And, since the Pentateuch was received as the book of the law both by the ten tribes, and also by the two tribes, it follows as a necessary consequence, that they each received it *before* they became divided into two kingdoms; for if it had been forged in a later age among the Jews, the perpetual enmity that subsisted between them and the Israelites would have utterly prevented it from being adopted by the Samaritans; and had it been a spurious production of the Samaritans, it would never have been received by the Jews. "There remains, therefore, only one resource to those who contend that Moses was not the author, namely, that it was written in the period which elapsed between the age of Joshua and that of Solomon. But the whole Jewish history, from the time of their settlement in Canaan, to the building of the temple at Jerusalem, presupposes that the book of the law was written by Moses. The whole of the temple service and worship was regulated by Solomon, B. C. 1004, according to the law contained in the Pentateuch; as the tabernacle service and worship had previously been by David, B. C. 1042. Could Solomon indeed have persuaded his subjects, that, for more than five hundred years, the worship and polity prescribed by the Pentateuch had been religiously observed by their ancestors if it had not been observed? Could he have imposed upon them concerning the antiquity of the Sabbath, of circumcision, and of their three great festivals? In fact, it is morally impossible that any forgery could have been executed by or in the time of Solomon. Moreover, that the Pentateuch was extant in the time of David is evident from the very numerous allusions made in his psalms to its contents[2]; but it could not have been drawn up by him, since the law contained in the Pentateuch forbids many practices of which David was guilty. Samuel (who judged Israel about the years B. C. 1100—1060 or 1061) could not have acquired the knowledge of Egypt which the Pentateuch implies;" and in the book of Joshua (which, though reduced to its present form in later times, was undoubtedly composed, in respect to its essential parts, at a very early period) frequent references may be found to the *Book of the Law.* "For instance, Joshua is commanded *to do according to all which the Law of Moses commanded:* and it is enjoined upon him, that *this Book of the Law should not depart out of his mouth.* (Josh. i. 7, 8.) Joshua, in taking leave of the people of Israel, exhorts them *to do all which is written in the Book of the Law of Moses* (xxiii. 6.); and he recites on this occasion many things contained in it. When the same distinguished leader had taken his final farewell of the tribes, he wrote the words of his address in the *Book of the Law of God.* (xxiv. 26.) In like manner it is said (viii. 30—34.) that Joshua built an altar on mount Ebal, as *it is written in the Book of the Law of*

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iv. 4. The learned Abbadie has shown at considerable length that Ezra could not and did not forge the Pentateuch, and that it was extant long before his time; but his arguments do not admit of abridgment. See his Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tom. i. pp. 312—330., and also the Mélanges de Religion, &c. tom. ix. pp. 244—248. Nismes, 1824.

[1] It is true that the ten tribes, as well as those of Judah and Benjamin, were addicted to idolatry; but it appears from 2 Kings iii. 2., x. 21—28., xviii. 28., and 2 Chron. xxxv. 18. that they considered the religion of Jehovah as the only true religion.

[2] See particularly Psal. i. 2., xix. 7—11., xl. 7, 8., lxxiv. 13—15., lxxvii. 15—20., lxxviii. 1—55., lxxxi. 4—13., cv., throughout, cvi. 1—39., cxxxv. 8—12., cxxxvi. 10—20., and particularly the whole of Psal. cxix.

Moses, and that *he read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law.*" [1] The Pentateuch therefore was extant in the time of Joshua.

To Moses alone, indeed, can the Pentateuch be attributed: and this indirect evidence from tradition is stronger than a more direct and positive ascription, which would have been the obvious resource of fraud. Nor would any writer *posterior* to Moses, who was contriving a sanction for actual laws, have noticed the progressive variations of those institutes (compare Lev. xvii. with Deut. xii. 5—27.) as the composer of the Pentateuch has done. These considerations most completely refute the assertion of Volney, who has affirmed, in the face of the clearest evidence, that it is in vain to look for any indication whatever of the existence of the Pentateuch, either in the book of Joshua (one of the most ancient), or in the book so called of Judges, or in the two books entitled Samuel, or, finally, in the history of the first Jewish kings. Such a bold and unfounded assertion as this could only have been made, either through wilful ignorance, or with a design to mislead the unthinking multitude.

Decisive as the preceding chain of evidence is that the Pentateuch is the undoubted work of Moses, a question has of late years been agitated, whence did he derive the materials for the history contained in the book of Genesis which commenced so many ages before he was born? To this inquiry the following very satisfactory answers may be given:—

There are only three ways in which these important records could have been preserved and brought down to the time of Moses, viz., writing, tradition, and divine revelation. In the antediluvian world, when the life of man was so protracted, there was, comparatively, little need for writing. Tradition answered every purpose to which writing in any kind of characters could be subservient; and the necessity of erecting monuments to perpetuate public events could scarcely have suggested itself; as, during those times, there could be little danger apprehended of any important fact becoming obsolete, its history having to pass through very few hands, and all these friends and relatives in the most proper sense of the terms; for they lived in an insulated state, under a patriarchal government. Thus it was easy for Moses to be satisfied of the truth of all he relates in the book of Genesis, as the accounts came to him through the medium of very few persons. From Adam to Noah there was but *one* man necessary to the correct transmission of the history of this period of 1656 years. Adam died in the year of the world 930, and Lamech, the father of Noah, was born in the year 874; so that Adam and Lamech were contemporaries for fifty-six years. Methuselah, the grandfather of Noah, was born in the year of the world 687, and died in the year 1656, so that he lived to see both Adam and Lamech (from whom doubtless he acquired the knowledge of this history), and was likewise contemporary with Noah for six hundred

[1] Bp. Marsh's Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses vindicated, pp. 9, 10. North American Review, New Series, vol. xxii. pp. 283, 284. The arguments above stated are more fully considered and elucidated in Mr. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, vol. i. pp. 305—336. The very numerous texts in which the Pentateuch is cited by the writers of the Old Testament *subsequent to Moses* are given at length by Huet, Demonstr. Evangel. lib. i. prop. 4. cap. i. (tom. i. pp. 68—73. 8vo.); Du Voisin, L'Autorité des Livres de Moyse établi, pp. 26—37.; Dr. Graves, Lectures on Pentateuch, vol. i. pp. 19—34.; and Prof. Jahn, Introd. ad Vet. Fœd. pp. 209—214. 221—224.

years. In like manner, Shem connected Noah and Abraham, having lived to converse with both; as Isaac did with Abraham and Joseph, from whom these things might be easily conveyed to Moses by Amram, who was contemporary with Joseph. Supposing, then, all the curious facts recorded in the book of Genesis to have had no other authority than the tradition already referred to, they would stand upon a foundation of credibility superior to any which the most reputable of the ancient Greek and Latin historians can boast.

Another solution of the question, as to the source from which Moses obtained the materials for his history, has been offered of late years by many eminent biblical critics; who, from the genealogical details, the circumstantiality of the relations, the specific numbers of years assigned to the patriarchs, as well as the dates of the facts recorded, have come to the conclusion that Moses could not have learned the particulars related by him with such minute exactness, but from written documents. This view of the question furnishes a satisfactory solution of many alleged contradictions, as well as of alleged marks of posterior date, and of posterior interpolation, on which some antagonists of divine revelation have laid much stress. The fact of the documents or records of former ages having been consulted will not detract, in the smallest degree, from the genuineness and authenticity of the book of Genesis. That book has been received by the Hebrews or Jews, in all ages, as the undoubted composition of Moses. It is not necessary to suppose that he received, by inspiration, an account of facts which he might easily have obtained by natural means. All that is necessary to believe is, that the Spirit of God directed him in the choice of the facts which he has recorded; enabled him to represent them without partiality; and preserved him from being led into mistakes by any inaccuracy which found its way into the annals or documents which he consulted. "If this be admitted, it is of no consequence whether Moses compiled the book of Genesis from annals preserved in the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or wrote the whole of it by immediate inspiration; for, on either supposition, it is a narrative of divine authority, and contains an authentic account of facts, which constitute the foundation of the Jewish and Christian religions; or, to use more accurate language, the one great but progressive scheme of revealed religion."[1]

[ii.] *Gentile Testimony.*—In addition to the native testimony of the Jews, which has been already stated, respecting the genuineness and authenticity of the Pentateuch, we have the *undisputed testimony of the most distinguished* WRITERS OF PAGAN ANTIQUITY; which will have the greater weight, as they were generally prejudiced against the whole nation of the Jews.

Thus, Manetho, Eupolemus, Artapanus, Tacitus, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Justin the abbreviator of Trogus, and Juvenal, besides many other ancient writers,

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[1] Dr. Gleig's edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible, vol. i. p. 21.

ALL testify that Moses was the leader of the Jews, and the founder of their laws.[1] The Egyptians, as Josephus asserts, esteemed him to be a wonderful and divine man; and were willing to have him thought a priest of their own, which certainly was a proof of their high opinion of him, though mixed with other fabulous relations.[2] The great critic, Longinus, extolling those who represent the Deity as he really is, pure, great, and unmixed[3], testifies that thus did the legislator of the Jews; who (says he) was no ordinary man, and, as he conceived, so he spoke worthily of the power of God. Numenius, the Pythagorean philosopher, of Apamea in Syria, called Moses a man most powerful in prayer to God, and said, "What is Plato but Moses speaking in the Attic dialect?"[4] which sentiment, whether just or not, is yet a proof of this philosopher's high opinion of Moses.

Further, Porphyry, one of the most acute and learned enemies of Christianity, admitted the genuineness of the Pentateuch, and acknowledged that Moses was prior to the Phœnician historian Sanchoniathon, who lived before the Trojan war. He even contended for the truth of Sanchoniathon's account of the Jews, from its coincidence with the Mosaic history. Nor was the genuineness of the Pentateuch denied by any of the numerous writers against the Gospel during the first four centuries of the Christian æra, although the fathers constantly appealed to the history and prophecies of the Old Testament in support of the divine origin of the doctrines which they taught. The power of historical truth compelled the emperor Julian, whose favour to the Jews appears to have proceeded solely from his hostility to the Christians, to acknowledge that persons instructed by the Spirit of God once lived among the Israelites; and to confess that the books which bore the name of Moses were genuine, and that the facts they contained were worthy of credit. Even Mohammed maintained the inspiration of Moses, and revered the sanctity of the Jewish laws. Manetho, Berosus, and many others, give accounts confirming and according with the Mosaic history. The Egyptian, Phœnician, Greek, and Roman authors, concur in relating the tradition respecting the creation, the fall of man, the deluge, and the dispersion of mankind[5]; and the lately acquired knowledge of the Sanscrit language, by opening the treasures of the eastern world, has confirmed all these traditions, as concurring with the narrative in the sacred history.[6] Yet, notwithstanding all these testimonies to the genuineness of the Pentateuch, and consequently to the character of Moses, his very existence has been denied, and the account of him pronounced to be perfectly mythological.

"To the preceding demonstration perhaps the following objection will be made:— 'We will admit the force of your arguments, and grant that Moses actually wrote a work called the Book of the Law: but how can we be certain that it was the very work which is now current under his name? And unless you can show this to be at least probable, your whole evidence is of no value.' To illustrate the force or weakness of this objection, let us apply it to some ancient Greek author, and see whether a classical scholar would allow it to be of weight. 'It is true that the Greek writers speak of Homer as an ancient and celebrated poet; it is true also that they have quoted from the works which they ascribe to him various passages that we find at present in the Iliad and Odyssey: yet still there is a possibility that the poems which were written by Homer, and those which we call the Iliad and Odyssey, were totally distinct productions.' Now an advocate for Greek literature

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[1] Bishop Newton has collected all the leading testimonies above noticed, concerning Moses *at length*, in his Dissertation on Moses and his writings. Works, vol. i. pp. 32—40. 8vo. edition. Du Voisin, l'Autorité des Livres de Moyse, pp. 53—56.

[2] Josephus contra Apion. lib. i. § 31.

[3] Longinus de Sublimitate, § 9. p. 50. ed. 2da. Pearce.

[4] Numenius apud Clem. Alexandr. Stromata, lib. i. § 22. p. 41. edit. Potter. Eusebius, Præp. Evang. lib. ix. § 6. et 8.

[5] The topics here briefly glanced at are considered more fully, *infrà*, Chapter III. Sect. I.

[6] The Discourses of Sir William Jones, delivered to the Asiatic Society at Calcutta, and printed in the three first volumes of their Researches, the Indian Antiquities, and History of India, by Mr. Maurice, may be referred to, as containing incontestible evidence of the antiquity and genuineness of the Mosaic records. Mr. Carwithen has very ably condensed all the information to be derived from these voluminous works, in his Bampton Lectures for the year 1809, particularly in the first five discourses.

would reply to this objection, not with a serious answer, but with a smile of contempt; and he would think it beneath his dignity to silence an opponent who appeared to be deaf to the clearest conviction. But still more may be said in defence of Moses than in defence of Homer; for the writings of the latter were not deposited in any temple, or sacred archive, in order to secure them from the devastations of time, whereas the copy of the book of the law, as written by Moses, was intrusted to the priests and the elders, preserved in the ark of the covenant, and read to the people every seventh year.[1] Sufficient care therefore was taken, not only for the preservation of the original record, but that no spurious production should be substituted in its stead. And that no spurious production ever has been substituted in the stead of the original composition of Moses, appears from the evidence both of the Greek Septuagint, and of the Samaritan Pentateuch. For as these agree with the Hebrew, except in some trifling variations[2], to which every work is exposed by length of time, it is absolutely certain that the five books, which we *now* ascribe to Moses, are one and the same work with that which was translated into Greek in the time of the Ptolemies, and, what is of still greater importance, with that which existed in the time of Solomon.[3] And as the Jews could have had no motive whatsoever, during the period which elapsed between the age of Joshua and that of Solomon, for substituting a spurious production instead of the original as written by Moses; and even had they been inclined to attempt the imposture, would have been prevented by the care which had been taken by their lawgiver, we must conclude that our present Pentateuch is the identical work that was delivered by Moses."

4. *But, besides the external evidence which has been produced in favour of the books in question, equally convincing arguments may be drawn from their* CONTENTS.

The very mode of writing, in the four last books, discovers an author contemporary with the events which he relates; every description, both religious and political, is a proof that the writer was present at each respective scene; and the legislative and historical parts are so interwoven with each other, that neither of them could have been written by a man who lived in a later age. For instance, the frequent genealogies which occur in the Pentateuch form a strong proof that it was composed by a writer of a very early date, and from original materials. "The genealogies[4] of the Jewish tribes were not mere arbitrary lists of names, in which the writer might insert as many fictitious ones as he pleased, retaining only some few more conspicuous names of existing families, to preserve an appearance of their being founded in reality; but they were a complete enumeration of all the original stocks; from some one of which every family in the Jewish nation derived its origin, and in which no name was to be inserted, whose descendants or heirs did not exist in possession of the property which the original family had possessed at the first division of the promised land. The distribution of property by tribes and families proves that some such catalogues of families as we find in the Pentateuch must have existed at the very first division of the country; these must have been carefully preserved, because the property of every family was unalienable, since, if sold, it was to return to the original family at each year of

[1] And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the years of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. And it came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God. Deut. xxxi. 9—11. 24—26. There is a passage to the same purpose in Josephus: *Δηλοῦται διὰ τῶν ἀνακειμένων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ γραμμάτων.* Josephi Antiquitat. lib. v. c. i. § 17. tom. i. p. 185. ed. Hudson.

[2] See the collation of the Hebrew and Samaritan Pentateuch, in the sixth volume of the London Polyglott, p. 19. of the Animadversiones Samariticæ.

[3] See Waltoni Prolegom. xi. § 11.

[4] Vide Numb. ch. i. ii. and iii., and especially ch. xxvi. and xxxiv.

jubilee. The genealogies of the Pentateuch, if they differed from this known and authentic register, would have been immediately rejected, and with them, the whole work. They therefore impart to the entire history all the authenticity of such a public register: for surely it is not in the slightest degree probable that the Pentateuch should ever have been received as the original record of the settlement and division of Judæa, if so important a part of it as the register of the genealogies had been known to exist long before its publication, and to have been merely copied into it from pre-existing documents.

"Again, we may make a similar observation on the geographical enumerations of places in the Pentateuch[1]; the accounts constantly given, of their deriving their names from particular events and particular persons; and on the details of marches and encampments which occur, first in the progress of the direct narrative, when only some few stations distinguished by remarkable facts are noticed, and afterwards at its close, where a regular list is given of all the stations of the Jewish camp. All this looks like reality: whenever the Pentateuch was published, it would have been immediately rejected, except the account it gives of the origin of these names, and of the series of these marches, had been known to be true by the Jews in general; for the book states that many of these names were adopted in consequence of these events, from the very time they took place; and it also states that the entire nation was engaged in these marches. Now, the memory of such circumstances as these cannot long exist without writing. If the Pentateuch was not what it pretends to be, the original detail of these circumstances, it could not have been received; for, if it was published long after the events, and there was no pre-existing document of these details, which it delivers as things well known, how could it be received as true? If it was copied from a known pre-existing document, how could it be received as being itself the original? Besides, it is natural for the spectator of events to connect every circumstance with the place where it happened. An inventor of fiction would not venture upon this, as it would facilitate the detection of his falsehood; a compiler long subsequent would not trouble himself with it, except in some remarkable cases. The very natural and artless manner in which all circumstances of this nature are introduced in the Pentateuch increases the probability of its being the work of an eye-witness, who could introduce them with ease, while to any body else it would be extremely difficult, and therefore unnatural; since it would render his work much more laborious, without making it more instructive.

"All these things bespeak a writer present at the transactions, deeply interested in them, recording each object as it was suggested to his mind by facts, conscious he had such authority with the persons to whom he wrote, as to be secure of their attention, and utterly indifferent as to style or ornament, and those various arts which are employed to fix attention and engage regard; which an artful forger would probably have employed, and a compiler of even a true history would not have judged beneath his attention."[2]

The frequent repetitions, too, which occur in the Pentateuch, and the neglect of order in delivering the precepts, are strong proofs that it has come down to us precisely as it was written by Moses, at various times, and upon different occasions, during the long abode of the Israelites in the wilderness. Had the Pentateuch been re-written by any later hand, there would in all probability have been an appearance of greater exactness; its contents would have been digested into better order, and would not have abounded with so many repetitions.

"For example, the law respecting the passover is introduced in Exodus xii. 1—28.; resumed in Exodus xii. 43—51.; again in chapter xiii.; and once more, with supplements, in Numbers ix. 1—14. Would a compiler, after the exile, have scattered these notices of the passover in so many different places? Surely not; he would naturally have embodied all the traditions concerning it in one chapter. But now every thing wears the exact appearance of having been recorded in the order in which it happened. New exigences occasioned new ordinances; and these are recorded, as they were made, *pro re nata*.

"In like manner the code of the priests not having been finished at once in the

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[1] Vide Exod. xiv. 2., xv. 27., xvii. 7. And compare Numbers, ch. xx. xxi. and xxxiii. xxxiv. xxxv.; also Deut. i. ii. iii.

[2] Dr. Grave's Lectures on Pentateuch, vol. i. pp. 50—53.

book of Leviticus, the subject is resumed, and completed at various times, and on various occasions, as is recorded in the subsequent books of the Pentateuch. So, the subject of sin and trespass offerings is again and again resumed, until the whole arrangements are completed. Would not a later compiler have embodied these subjects respectively together?

"Besides repeated instances of the kind just alluded to, cases occur in which statutes made at one time are repealed or modified at another; as, in Exod. xxi. 2—7. compared with Deut. xv. 12—23.; Numb. iv. 24—33. compared with Numb. vii. 1—9.; Numb. iv. 3. compared with Numb. viii. 24.; Levit. xvii. 3, 4. compared with Deut. xii. 15.; Exod. xxii. 25. compared with Deut. xxiii. 19.; Exod. xxii. 16, 17. compared with Deut. xxii. 29.; and other like instances. How could a compiler, at the time of the captivity, know any thing of the original laws in those cases, which had gone into desuetude from the time of Moses?"[1]

All these examples prove that the Pentateuch was (as it purports to be) written by Moses at different times, and in many different parcels at first, which were afterwards united. To these considerations we may add, that no other person besides Moses himself could write the Pentateuch; because, on comparing together the different books of which it is composed, there is an exact agreement in the different parts of the narrative, as well with each other as with the different situations in which Moses, its supposed author, is placed. And this agreement discovers itself in *coincidences so minute, so latent, so indirect, and so evidently undesigned* that nothing could have produced them but reality and truth, influencing the mind and directing the pen of the legislator.[2]

"The account which is given in the book of Exodus of the conduct of Pharaoh towards the children of Israel is such as might be expected from a writer who was not only acquainted with the country at large, but had frequent access to the court of its sovereign; and the minute geographical description of the passage through Arabia is such as could have been given only by a man like Moses, who had spent forty years in the land of Midian. The language itself is a proof of its high antiquity, which appears partly from the great simplicity of the style, and partly from the use of archaisms, or antiquated expressions, which in the days even of David and Solomon were obsolete.[3] But the strongest argument that can be produced to show that the Pentateuch was written by a man born and educated in Egypt, is the use of Egyptian words[4], which never were nor ever could have been used by a native of Palestine; and it is a remarkable circumstance that the very same thing which Moses had expressed by a word that is pure Egyptian, Isaiah, as might be expected from his birth and education, has expressed by a word that is purely Hebrew."[5]

V. We here close the *positive* evidence for the authenticity of the Pentateuch; it only remains therefore that we notice the OBJEC-

[1] North American Review, New Series, vol. xxii. p. 288.

[2] These coincidences are illustrated at a considerable length by Dr. Graves, in his third and fourth lectures (on the Pentateuch, vol. i. pp. 69—121.), to which we must refer the reader, as the argument would be impaired by abridgment; as also to "The Veracity of the Five Books of Moses argued from the undesigned Coincidences to be found in them, when compared in their several Parts. By the Rev. J. J. Blunt. London, 1830." 8vo.

[3] For instance, הוא, *ille*, and נער, *puer*, which are used in both genders by no other writer than Moses. See Gen. xxiv. 14. 16. 28. 55. 57., xxxviii. 21. 25.

[4] For instance, אחו (perhaps written originally אחי, and the י lengthened into ו by mistake), written by the LXX. αχι or αχει, Gen. xli. 2. and תבה, written by the LXX. θιβη or θιβις. See La Croze, Lexicon Egyptiacum, art. AXI and ΘΗΒΙ.

[5] The same thing which Moses expresses by אחו (Gen. xli. 2.), Isaiah (xix. 7.) expresses by ערות, for the LXX. have translated both of these words by αχι.—The Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses vindicated, pp. 11—14. See also Jahn, Introd. ad Lect. Vet. Fœd. pp. 204—209.

Will it be credited that, after the body of evidence above adduced (the greater part of which has been published in the English, German, or Latin languages for nearly two hundred years), the late Count Volney should assert that the book of Genesis is not a national monument of the Jews, but a Chaldean monument, retouched and arranged by the high priest Hilkiah (who lived *only* 827 years after Moses), so as to produce a premeditated effect, both political and religious!!!

TIONS to it which have been deduced from marks of a supposed *posterior date*, and also from marks of supposed *posterior interpolation*, and which have so often been urged with the insidious design of weakening the authority of the Mosaic writings.

[i.] With respect to the alleged marks of *posterior date*, it is a singular fact that the objections which have been founded on them are derived — not from the original Hebrew, but from *modern translations;* they are in themselves so trifling, that, were it not for the imposing manner in which they are announced by those who impugn the Scriptures, they would be utterly unworthy of notice. The following are the principal passages alluded to: —

OBJECTION 1. — From the occurrence of the word *Gentiles* in the English version of Gen. x. 5., of *Israel*, in Gen. xxxiv. 7., and of *Palestine*, in Exod. xv. 14., it has been affirmed that those two books were not written till after the Israelites were established in Jerusalem, nor indeed till after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity.

ANSWER. — If, however, the objector had referred to the original passages, he would have seen that there was no ground for these assertions. For, in the first place, the Hebrew word גוים (GOVIM), in Gen. x. 5., most frequently means *nations* in general, and so it is rendered several times in this chapter, besides many other passages in various books of the Old Testament, the style of which proves that they were written before the captivity; and this word was *not* understood of the *heathen*, that is, of those who had not the knowledge and worship of the true God, *until after the captivity*.[1] Secondly, the proper rendering of Gen. xxxiv. 7. is, *wrought folly* AGAINST Israel, that is, against Jacob, who was also called Israel. See Gen. xxxii. 28., xxxv. 10., and xlvii. 31. The preposition ב (*Beth*) means *against* as well as *in*, and so it is rendered in Numb. xxi. 7. The name of Israel did not become a patronymic of his descendants until more than two hundred years afterwards. Compare Exod. iv. 22. Thirdly, the name of Palestine is of comparatively modern date, being first used by the heathen geographers; and is given by almost all translators of the book of Genesis, to indicate more clearly the country intended, namely that of the Philistines. The Hebrew word in Exod. xv. 14. is פלשת (PALESHETH), which the Greek writers softened into Παλαιστίνη, and the Latin writers into *Palæstina*, whence our Palestine.

OBJ. 2. — Deut. i. 1. contains a clear evidence that Moses could not be the author of that book.

ANSWER. — The objection was first made by Spinoza, and from him it has been copied without acknowledgment by various subsequent opposers of the Scriptures; but it is founded on a mistranslation. According to these objectors, the verse runs thus: — "These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel BEYOND Jordan in the wilderness." And as Moses never went over Jordan, they say it is evident that the writer of the book of Deuteronomy lived on the west side of that river, and consequently could not be Moses. The words ב עבר (BE-ÊBER) mean *at* the pasage of *Jordan*, that is, near or opposite to the place where the Israelites passed over the Jordan, after the death of Moses. Although עבר (ÂBER) is used to signify both *on this side* and *on the other side* (and the connection in which it stands can only determine the meaning), yet here it signifies neither, but simply the *place* or *ford* where the Israelites passed over Jordan.[2]

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[1] Vorstius, de Hebraismis Novi Testamenti, p. 44. 8vo. Lipsiæ, 1778.
[2] Dr. A. Clarke on Deut. i. 1. The learned rabbi Cahen translates *sur la rive*, on the bank of Jordan. La Bible . . . . avec l'Hébreu en régard, Tom. v. p. 1.

[ii.] With regard to the alleged marks of *posterior interpolation*, it must be acknowledged that there are some such passages, but a *few* insertions can never prove the *whole* to be spurious. We have, indeed, abundant reason still to receive the rest as genuine; for no one ever denied the Iliad or Odyssey to be the works of Homer, because *some* ancient critics and grammarians have asserted that a *few* verses are interpolations. The interpolations in the Pentateuch, however, are much fewer and less considerable than they are generally imagined to be; and all the objections which have been founded upon them (it is observed by the learned prelate to whom this section is so deeply indebted) may be comprised under one general head—namely, "*expressions and passages found in the Pentateuch which could not have been written by Moses.*" A brief notice of some of the passages objected to will show how little reason there is for such objections.

Objection 1. — In Deut. xxxiv. the *death* of Moses is described; and therefore that chapter could not have been written by him.

Answer. — Deut. xxxiii. has evident marks of being the close of the Book, as finished by Moses; and the thirty-fourth chapter was added, either by Joshua or some other sacred writer, as a supplement to the whole. Or, it may formerly have been the commencement of the book of Joshua, and in process of time removed thence, and joined to Deuteronomy by way of supplement.

Obj. 2. — There are names of cities mentioned in the Pentateuch, which names were not given to those cities till after the death of Moses. For instance, a city which was originally called Laish, but changed its name to that of Dan, after the Israelites had conquered Palestine (Judg. xviii. 22.), is yet denominated Dan in the book of Genesis. (xiv. 14.). The book itself, therefore, it is said, must have been written after the Israelites had taken possession of the Holy Land.

Answer.—But is it not possible that Moses originally wrote Laish, and that, after the name of the city had been changed, transcribers, for the sake of perspicuity, substituted the new for the old name? This might so easily have happened that the solution is hardly to be disputed, in a case where the positive arguments in favour of the word in question are so very decisive.[1]

Obj. 3. — The tower of Edar, mentioned in Gen. xxxv. 21., was the name of a Tower over one of the gates of Jerusalem; and therefore the author of the book of Genesis must at least have been contemporary with Saul and David.

Answer. — This objection involves a manifest absurdity, for if the writer of this passage had meant the tower of Edar in Jerusalem, he would have made Israel spread his tent beyond a tower that probably did not exist till many hundred years after his death. The tower of Edar signifies, literally, the tower of the flocks; and as this name was undoubtedly given to many towers, or places of retreat for shepherds, in the open country of Palestine, which in the days of the patriarchs was covered with flocks, it is unnecessary to suppose that it meant in particular a tower of Jerusalem.

Obj. 4. — In Exod. xvi. 35, 36. we read thus: — *And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came into a land in-*

[1] An example of the same kind is "Hebron" (Gen. xiii. 18.), which before the conquest of Palestine was called Kirjath-Arba, as appears from Josh. xiv. 15. This example may be explained in the same manner as the preceding.

habited: they did eat manna, until they came into the borders of the land of Canaan. Now an omer is the tenth part of the ephah. This could not have been written by Moses, as the Jews did not reach the borders of Canaan, or cease to eat manna, until after his death; nor would Moses speak thus of an omer, the measure by which all the people gathered the manna, *an omer for every man.* It is the language of one speaking when this measure was out of use, and an ephah more generally known.

Answer. — This passage is evidently inserted by a later hand. It forms a complete parenthesis, entirely unconnected with the narrative, which, having given a full account of the miraculous provision of manna, closes it with the order to Aaron *to lay up an omer full of manna in the ark, as a memorial to be kept for their generations.* This was evidently the last circumstance relating to this matter which it was necessary for Moses to mention; and he accordingly then resumes the regular account of the journeyings of the people. Some later writer was very naturally led to insert the additional circumstance of the time during which this miraculous provision was continued, and probably added an explanatory note, to ascertain the capacity of an omer, which was the quantity of food provided for each individual by God. To ascertain it, therefore, must have been a matter of curiosity.

In like manner, Numb. xxi. 3. was evidently added after the days of Joshua; it is parenthetical, and is not necessary to complete the narrative of Moses.

Obj. 5. — The third verse of the twelfth chapter of the book of Numbers (*Now the man Moses was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth*) bears sufficient proof that Moses could not be the author of it; and that no man, however great his egotism, could have written such an assertion of himself.

Answer. — If the assertor of this objection had been acquainted with the original of this passage, instead of adopting it at second-hand from some of those who copied it from Spinoza (for it was first broached by him), he would have known that the passage was mistranslated, not only in our own English version, but also in *all modern* translations. The word עָנָו (onav), which is translated *meek*, is derived from עָנָה (onah) to *act upon*, to *humble*, *depress*, *afflict*, and so it is rendered in many places in the Old Testament, and in this sense it ought to be understood in the passage now under consideration, which ought to be thus translated. Now the man Moses was *depressed* or *afflicted more than any man* הָאֲדָמָה (headamah) *of that land.* And why was he so? Because of the great burden he had to sustain in the care and government of the Israelites, and also on account of their ingratitude and rebellion, both against God and himself. Of this affliction and depression, there is the fullest evidence in the eleventh chapter of the book of Numbers. The very power which the Israelites envied was oppressive to its possessor, and was more than either of *their* shoulders could sustain.[1] But let the passage be interpreted in the sense in which it is rendered in our authorised English version, and what does it prove? Nothing at all. The character given of Moses as the meekest of men might be afterwards inserted by some one who revered his memory.

Obj. 6. — The most formidable Objection, however, that has been urged against the Pentateuch, is that which is drawn from the two following passages, the one in the book of Genesis (xxxvi. 31.), the other in the book of Deuteronomy (iii. 14.): *These are the kings that reigned over the land of Edom,* BEFORE THERE REIGNED ANY KING OVER THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. And again, *Jair, the son of*

[1] Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary, in loc. Holden's Christian Expositor, vol. i. p. 160.

Manasseh, took all the country of Argob unto the coasts of Geshuri, and Maachathi, and called them after his own name, Bashon-havoth-jair, UNTO THIS DAY. Now it is certain that the last clause in each of these examples could not have been written by Moses; for the one implies a writer who lived after the establishment of monarchy in Israel, the other a writer who lived at least some ages after the settlement of the Jews in Palestine.[1]

ANSWER. — If these clauses were not written by the author of the Pentateuch, but inserted by some transcriber in a later age, they affect not the authenticity of the work itself. And whoever impartially examines the contents of these two passages, will find that the clauses in question are not only unnecessary, but even a burden to the sense. The clause of the second example in particular could not possibly have proceeded from the author of the rest of the verse, who, whether Moses or any other person, would hardly have written, "He called them after his own name *unto this day*." The author of the Pentateuch wrote, "He called them after his own name:" some centuries after the death of the author, the clause "unto this day" was probably added in the margin, to denote that the district still retained the name which was given it by Jair, and this marginal reading was in subsequent transcripts obtruded on the text. Whoever doubts the truth of this assertion, needs only to have recourse to the manuscripts of the Greek Testament, and he will find that the spurious additions in the texts of some manuscripts are actually written in the margin of others."[2]

So far, however, is the insertion of such notes from impeaching the antiquity and genuineness of the original narrative, that, on the contrary, it rather confirms them; and such explanatory insertions would not have been made, if length of time had not rendered them necessary.[3]

We have therefore every possible evidence that the substance of the Pentateuch proceeded from the hands of Moses; "and the various charges that have been brought against it amount to nothing more than this, that it has not descended to the present age without some few alterations; a circumstance at which we ought not to be surprised, when we reflect on the many thousands of transcripts that have been made from it in the course of three thousand years."[4] The authority of the Pentateuch being thus established, that of the other books of the Old Testament follows of course; for so great is their mutual and immediate dependence upon each other, that if one be taken away, the authority of the other must necessarily fall.

[1] Witsius, in his Miscellanea Sacra, p. 125., says the clause, "before there reigned any king over the children of Israel," might have been written by Moses; but he cuts the knot instead of untying it.

[2] To mention only two examples. The common reading of 1 Cor. xvi. 2. is μίαν σαββάτων; but the Codex Petavianus 3. has τὴν κυριακὴν in the margin, and in one of the manuscripts used by Beza this marginal addition has been obtruded on the text. See his note to this passage. Another instance is 1 John ii. 27., where the genuine reading is χρῖσμα; but Wetstein quotes two manuscripts in which πνεῦμα is written in the margin, and this marginal reading has found its way not only into the Codex Covelli 2., but into the Coptic and Ethiopic versions.

[3] Dr. Graves's Lectures, vol. i. p. 346.

[4] Bishop Marsh's Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses vindicated, pp. 15. 18. The texts above considered, which were excepted against by Spinoza, Le Clerc (who subsequently wrote a Dissertation to refute his former objections), the late Dr. Geddes, and some opposers of revelation since his decease, are considered, discussed, and satisfactorily explained at great length by Huet, Dem. Evang. prop. iv. cap. 14. (tom. i. pp. 254—264.), and by Dr. Graves in the appendix to his Lectures on the four last Books of the Pentateuch, vol. i. pp. 332—361. See also Carpzov. Introd. ad Libros Biblicos Vet. Test. pp. 38—41. Moldenhawer, Introd. ad Libros Canonicos Vet. et Nov. Test. pp. 16, 17 [Hooke's] Religionis Naturalis et Revelatæ Principia, tom. ii. pp. 3—51.

SECT. II.

ON THE GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

1. THAT an extraordinary person, called Jesus Christ, flourished in Judæa in the Augustan age, is a FACT (not a myth or fictitious narrative)[1] better supported and authenticated than that there lived such men as Cyrus, Alexander, and Julius Cæsar; for although their histories are recorded by various ancient writers, yet the memorials of their conquests and empires have for the most part perished. Babylon, Persepolis, and Ecbatana are no more. How few vestiges of Alexander's victorious arms are at present to be seen in Asia Minor and India! And equally few are the standing memorials in France and Britain, to evince that there was such a person as Julius Cæsar, who subdued the one and invaded the other. Not so defective are the evidences concerning the existence of Jesus Christ. That he lived in the reign of Tiberius, emperor of Rome, and that he suffered death under Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judæa, are facts which are not only acknowledged by the Jews of every subsequent age, and by the testimonies of several Heathen writers, but also by Christians of every age and country, who have commemorated, and still commemorate, the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, and his spiritual kingdom, by their constant and universal profession of certain principles of religion, and by their equally constant and universal celebration of divine worship on the Lord's day, or first day of the week, and likewise of the two ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These religious doctrines and ordinances they profess to derive from a collection of writings composed after the ascension of Jesus Christ, which they acknowledge to be divine, and to have been written by the first preachers of Christianity.[2]

As all who have claimed to be the founders of any particular sect or religion have left some written records of their institutes, it is a natural supposition that the first preachers of the Christian faith should have left some writings containing the principles which it requires to be believed, and the moral precepts which it enjoins to be performed. For although they were at first content with the oral publication of the actions and doctrines of their Master; yet they must have been apprehensive lest the purity of that first tradition should be altered after their decease by false teachers, or by those changes which are ordinarily effected in the course of time in whatever is transmitted orally. Besides, they would have to answer those who consulted them; they would have to furnish Christians, who lived at a distance, with lessons and instructions. Thus it became necessary that they should leave something in writing; and, if the apostles did leave any writings, they must be the same which have been preserved to our time; for it is incredible that all their writings should have been lost, and succeeded by supposititious pieces, and that

[1] That the life of Jesus Christ, recorded by the evangelists, is not a collection of myths, has been demonstrated at length, and most conclusively, by Dr. W. L. Alexander, in his "Christ and Christianity," pp. 88—122. Edinburgh, 1854.

[2] Dr. Harwood's Introduction to the New Testament, vol. i. pp. 1—6.

the whole of the Christian faith should have for its foundation only forged or spurious writings. Further, that the first Christians did receive some *written*, as well as some oral instruction, is a fact supported by the unanimous testimony of all the Christian churches, which, in every age since their establishment, have professed to read and to venerate certain books as the productions of the apostles, and as being the foundation of their faith. Now every thing which we know concerning the belief, worship, manners, and discipline of the first Christians, corresponds exactly with the contents of the books of the New Testament, which are now extant, and which are therefore most certainly the primitive instructions which they received.

The collection of these books or writings is generally known by the appellation of 'Η ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ, the New Covenant, or New Testament; a title which, though neither given by divine command, nor applied to these writings by the apostles, was adopted in a very early age.[1] Although the precise time of its introduction is not known, yet it is justified by several passages in the Scriptures[2], and is, in particular, warranted by Saint Paul, who calls the doctrines, precepts, and promises of the Gospel dispensation Καινὴ Διαθήκη, the New Covenant, in opposition to those of the Mosaic Dispensation, which he terms Παλαιὰ Διαθήκη, the Old Covenant.[3] This appellation, in process of time, was by a metonymy transferred to the collection of apostolical and evangelical writings. The title, "New Covenant," then, signifies the book which contains the terms of the New Covenant, upon which God is pleased to offer salvation to mankind through the mediation of Jesus Christ. But according to the meaning of the primitive church, which bestowed this title, it is not altogether improperly rendered *New Testament;* as being that in which the Christian's inheritance is sealed to him as a son and heir of God, and in which the death of Christ as a testator is related at large, and applied to our benefit. As this title implies that in the Gospel unspeakable gifts are given or bequeathed to us, antecedent to all conditions required of us, the title of Testament may be retained, although that of Covenant would be more correct and proper.[4]

II. The writings, thus collectively termed the New Testament,

[1] Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament, vol. i. p. 1. Bishop Marsh, in a note, thinks it probable that this title was used so early as the second century, because the word *testamentum* was used in that sense by the Latin Christians before the expiration of that period, as appears from Tertullian. Adversus Marcionem, lib. iv. c. 1. But the first instance in which the term καινὴ διαθήκη actually occurs in the sense of "writings of the new covenant" is in Origen's treatise Περὶ Ἀρχῶν, lib. iv. c. 1. (Op. tom. i. p. 156.)—Michaelis, vol. i. p. 343. See also Rosenmuller's Scholia in N. T. tom. i. p. 1.; Rumpæi Commentatio Critica in Libros Novi Testamenti, pp. 1—3.; Leusden's Philologus Hebræo-Græcus, p. 1.; and Pritii Introd. in Nov. Test. pp. 9—11.

[2] Matt. xxvi. 28.; Gal. iii. 17.; Heb. viii. 8., ix. 15—20.

[3] 2 Cor. iii. 6. 14.

[4] The learned professor Jablonski has an elegant dissertation on the word ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ; which, he contends, ought to be translated *Testament*, 1. From the usage of the Greek language; 2. From the nature of the design and will of God, which is called ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ; 3. From various passages of the New Testament, which evidently admit of no other signification; 4. From the notion of inheritance or heirship, under which the Scripture frequently designates the same thing; and, 5. From the consent of antiquity. Jablonskii Opuscula, tom. ii. pp. 393—423. Lug. Bat. 1804.

consist of twenty-seven books, composed on various occasions, and at different times and places, by eight different authors, all of whom were contemporary with Jesus Christ, viz. the Four Gospels, which bear the names of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the Acts of the Apostles, the Fourteen Epistles which bear the name of Paul, and which are addressed to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, to Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and to the Hebrews, the Seven Catholic Epistles (as they are called) of James, Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, and Jude, and the book of the Revelation, which likewise bears the name of John. These writings contain the history of Jesus Christ, the first propagation of his religion, together with the principles of Christianity, and various precepts or rules of life. The Gospels were written at various periods, and published for very different classes of believers; while the Epistles were addressed, as occasion required, to those various Christian communities which, by the successful labours of the apostles, had been spread over the greatest part of the then known world, and also to a few private individuals.

Different churches received different books according to their situation and circumstances. Their canons were gradually enlarged; and at no very great distance of time from the age of the apostles, with a view to secure to future ages a divine and perpetual standard of faith and practice, these writings were collected together into one volume, under the title of the "New Testament," or the "Canon of the New Testament." Neither the names of the persons that were concerned in making this collection, nor the exact time when it was undertaken, can at present be ascertained with any degree of certainty; nor is it at all necessary that we should be precisely informed concerning either of these particulars. It is sufficient for us to know that the principal parts of the New Testament were collected before the death of the Apostle John, or at least not long after that event.[1]

Modern advocates of infidelity, with their accustomed disregardof truth, have asserted that the Scriptures of the New Testament were never accounted canonical until the meeting of the provincial synod of bishops from parts of Lydia and Phrygia, commonly termed the council of Laodicea, and held at Laodicea in Phrygia Pacatiana, A. D. 364. The simple fact is, that the canons attributed to this synod or council are the earliest extant, which give a formal cata-

[1] Of all the various opinions which have been maintained concerning the person who first collected the canon of the New Testament, the most general seems to be, that the several books were originally collected by St. John;—an opinion for which the testimony of Eusebius (Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 24.) is very confidently quoted as an indisputable authority. But it is to be observed, says Mosheim, that, allowing even the highest degree of weight to Eusebius's authority, nothing further can be collected from his words than that St. John approved of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and added his own to them by way of supplement. Concerning any of the other books of the New Testament, Eusebius is totally silent. Mosheim's Commentaries, translated by Mr. Vidal, vol. i. p. 151. Stosch, in his learned Commentatio Critica de Librorum Nov. Test. Canone (pp. 103. *et seq.* 8vo. Frankfort, 1755), has given the opinions of Ens, Lampe, Frickius, Dodwell, Vitringa, and Dupin. He adopts the last, which in substance corresponds with that above given, and defends it at considerable length. Ibid. pp. 113. *et seq.*

logue of the books of the New Testament. There is, indeed, every reason to believe that the bishops who were present at Laodicea did not mean to settle the canon, but simply to mention those books which were to be publicly read.[1] Another reason why the canonical books were not mentioned before the provincial council of Laodicea, is presented in the persecutions to which the professors of Christianity were constantly exposed, and in the want of a national establishment of Christianity for several centuries, which prevented any general councils of Christians for the purpose of settling their canon of Scripture.[2] But though the number of the books thus received as sacred and canonical was not in the first instance determined by the authority of councils, we are not left in uncertainty concerning their genuineness and authenticity, for which we have infinitely more decisive and satisfactory evidence than we have for the productions of any ancient classic authors, concerning whose genuineness and authenticity no doubt was ever entertained.

III. We receive the books of the New Testament as the genuine works of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter, and Jude, for the same reason that we receive the writings of Xenophon, of Polybius, of Cæsar, Tacitus, and Quintus Curtius; namely, because we have the uninterrupted testimony of ages to their genuineness, and we have no reason to suspect imposition. This argument, Michaelis remarks, is much stronger when applied to the books of the New Testament than when applied to any other writings; for they were addressed to large societies in widely distant parts of the world, in whose presence they were often read, and were acknowledged by them to be the writings of the apostles. Whereas the most eminent profane writings, that are still extant, were addressed only to individuals, or to no persons at all: and we have no authority to affirm that they were read in public; on the contrary, we know that a liberal education was uncommon, books were scarce, and the knowledge of them was confined to a few individuals in every nation.

The New Testament was read over three quarters of the world, while profane writers were limited to one nation or to one country. An uninterrupted succession of writers, from the apostolic age to the present time (many of whom were men of distinguished learning and acuteness), either quote the Sacred Writings, or make allusions to them; and these quotations and allusions, as will be shown in a subsequent page, are made not only by friends, but also by enemies. This cannot be asserted of the best classic authors; and as translations of the New Testament were made in the second century, which in the course of one or two centuries more were greatly multiplied, it became absolutely impossible to forge new writings, or to corrupt the sacred

[1] This is evident from the words of the fifty-ninth canon:—*Οὐ δεῖ ἰδιωτικοὺς ψαλμοὺς λέγεσθαι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, οὐδὲ ἀκανόνιστα βιβλία, ἀλλὰ μόνα τὰ κανονικὰ τῆς καινῆς καὶ παλαιᾶς διαθήκης.*—"Private Psalms" [or Psalms composed by private men] "must not be read in the Church, but only the canonical books of the Old Testament." Beveregii Pandectæ Canonum, tom. i. p. 461. The Rev. B. F. Westcott has critically examined the Laodicean canon in his History of the Canon of the New Testament, pp. 496—508.

[2] Bp. Tomline's Elements of Christian Theology, vol. i. p. 270. Jones on the Canon, vol. i. p. 41. Oxford, 1798.

text, unless we suppose that men of different nations, sentiments, and languages, and often exceedingly hostile to each other, should *all* agree in one forgery. This argument is so strong, that, if we deny the authenticity of the New Testament, we may with a thousand times greater propriety reject all the other writings in the world; — we may even throw aside human testimony.[1] But as this subject is of the greatest importance (for the arguments that prove the authenticity of the New Testament also prove the truth of the Christian religion), we shall consider it more at length; and having first shown that the books, which compose the canon of the New Testament, are not spurious, we shall briefly consider the positive evidence for their authenticity.

A genuine book, as already remarked, is one written by the person whose name it bears as its author; the opposite to genuine is *spurious*, supposititious, or, as some critics term it, *pseudepigraphal*, that which is clandestinely put in the place of another. The reasons which may induce a critic to suspect a work to be spurious, are stated by Michaelis to be the following: —

1. When doubts have been entertained from its appearance in the world, whether it proceeded from the author to whom it is ascribed; —2. When the immediate friends of the pretended author, who were able to decide upon the subject, have denied it to be his production; —3. When a long series of years has elapsed after his death, in which the book was unknown, and in which it must unavoidably have been mentioned and quoted, had it really existed; —4. When the style is different from that of his other writings, or, in case no other remain, different from that which might reasonably be expected; —5. When events are recorded which happened later than the time of the pretended author; —6. When opinions are advanced which contradict those he is known to maintain in his other writings. Though this latter argument alone leads to no positive conclusion, since every man is liable to change his opinion, or, through forgetfulness, to vary in the circumstances of the same relation, of which Josephus, in his Antiquities and War of the Jews, affords a striking example.

Now, of all these various grounds for denying a work to be genuine, not one can be applied with justice to the New Testament. For, in the *first* place, it cannot be shown that any one doubted of its authenticity in the period in which it first appeared; — *Secondly*, no ancient accounts are on record, whence we may conclude it to be spurious; — *Thirdly*, no considerable period of time elapsed after the death of the apostles, in which the New Testament was unknown; but, on the contrary, it is mentioned by their very contemporaries, and the accounts of it in the second century are still more numerous; — *Fourthly*, no argument can be brought in its disfavour from the nature of the style, it being exactly such as might be expected from the apostles, not Attic, but Jewish Greek; — *Fifthly*, no facts are recorded which happened after their death; — *Lastly*, no doctrines are maintained which contradict the known tenets of the authors,

[1] Encyclopædia Britannica, vol. xvii. p. 135. 3d edit.

since, besides the New Testament, no writings of the apostles are in existence. But, to the honour of the New Testament be it spoken, it contains numerous contradictions to the tenets and doctrines of the fathers of the second and third centuries; whose morality is different from that of the Gospel, which recommends fortitude and submission to unavoidable evils, but not that enthusiastic ardour for martyrdom for which those centuries are distinguished. The New Testament also alludes to ceremonies, which in the following ages were disused or unknown; all which circumstances infallibly demonstrate that it is not a production of either of those centuries.[1]

IV. From the preceding considerations it is evident that there is not the smallest reason to doubt that these books are as certainly genuine as the most indisputable works of the Greeks and Romans. But that the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament do not rest on merely negative proof, we have evidence the most direct and positive which can be desired, and this evidence may be arranged under the following heads; namely, 1. The *Impossibility of a Forgery,* arising from the nature of the thing itself; — 2. *External* or *Historical Evidence,* arising from the ancient Christian, Jewish, and Heathen testimonies in its favour, and also from the ancient versions of the New Testament, which were made into various languages in the very first ages of the church, and which versions are still extant; —and, 3. *Internal Evidence,* arising from the character of the writers of the New Testament, from its language and style, from the circumstantiality of the narrative, and from the undesigned coincidences of the accounts delivered in the New Testament with the history of those times.

1. *The* IMPOSSIBILITY OF A FORGERY, *arising from the nature of the thing itself, is evident.*

It is impossible to establish forged writings as *authentic* in any place where there are persons strongly inclined and well qualified to detect the fraud.[2]

Now the Jews were the most violent enemies of Christianity: they put its founder to death; they persecuted his disciples with implacable fury; and they were anxious to stifle the new religion in its birth. If the writings of the New Testament had been forged, would not the Jews have detected the imposture? Is there a single instance on record, where a few individuals have imposed a history upon the world against the testimony of a whole nation? Would the inhabitants of Palestine have received the Gospels, if they had not had sufficient evidence that Jesus Christ really appeared among them,

[1] Michaelis's Introduction, vol. i. pp. 25—30.

[2] Witness the attempt unsuccessfully made at the close of the eighteenth century by Mr. Ireland, junior, in his celebrated Shaksperian Manuscripts, the fabrication of which was detected by Mr. Malone, in his masterly "Inquiry into the Authenticity of the Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments published December 24. 1795, and attributed to Shakspeare, Queen Elizabeth, and Henry, Earl of Southampton." London, 1796. 8vo. To which may now [1856] be added the so-called book of Mormon; whose pretences to Divine authority are most effectually exposed and refuted by Mr. T. W. P. Taylder in "The Mormon's own Book; or, Mormonism tried by its own Standards,—Reason and Scripture." London, 1855. 8vo.

and performed the miracles ascribed to him? Or would the churches at Rome or at Corinth have acknowledged the epistles addressed to them as the genuine works of Saint Paul, if he had never preached among them? Or, supposing any impostor to have attempted the invention and distribution of writings under his name, or the names of the other apostles, is it possible that they could have been received without contradiction in all the Christian communities of the three several quarters of the globe? We might as well attempt to prove that the history of the reformation is the invention of historians, and that no revolution happened in Great Britain during the seventeenth century, or in France during the eighteenth century, and the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century.[1] Indeed, from the marks of integrity, simplicity, and fidelity which every where pervade the writings of the apostles, we may be certain that they would not have attempted a forgery; and, if they had made the attempt in the apostolic age, when the things are said to have happened, every person must have been sensible of the forgery. As the volume, called the New Testament, consists of several pieces which are ascribed to eight persons, we cannot suppose it to have been an imposture; for if they had written in concert, they would not differ (as in a subsequent page we shall see that they do) in slight matters; and if one man wrote the whole, there would not be such a diversity as we see in the style of the different pieces. If the apostles were all honest, they were incapable of a forgery; and if they were all knaves, they were unlikely to labour to render men virtuous. If some of them were honest, and the rest cheats, the latter could not have deceived the former in respect to matters of fact; nor is it probable that impostors would have attempted a forgery which would have exposed them to many inconveniences. Had parts of the Scripture been fabricated in the second or third century by obscure persons, their forgeries would have been rejected by the intelligent and respectable; and if pious and learned men had forged certain passages, their frauds, however well intended, would have been discovered by the captious and insignificant, who are ever prone to criticise their superiors in virtue or abilities. If the teachers of Christianity in one kingdom forged certain passages of Scripture, the copies in the hands of laymen would discover such forgery; nor would it have been possible to obtain credit for such a forgery in other nations. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, having understood Greek and Hebrew, their Gospels, which were written in the former language, contain many Hebrew idioms and words. Hence we may be certain that the Gospels were not forged by those early Christian writers, or fathers (as they are called), who were strangers to Hebrew, since in such case they would not abound with Hebrew words; nor by Justin Martyr, Origen, or Epiphanius, since the style of the Greek writings of these fathers differs from that of the Gospels. Lastly, as the New Testament is not calculated to advance the private interest of priests or rulers, it could not be forged by the clergy or by princes;

[1] Michaelis, vol. i. p. 31. Ency. Brit. vol. xvii. p. 135.

and as its teachers suffered in propagating it, and as it was not the established religion of any nation for three hundred years, it is perfectly absurd to suppose it the offspring of priestcraft, or mere political contrivance. For three hundred years after Christ, no man had any thing to dread from exposing a forgery in the books of the New Testament; because, during that time, the Christians had not the power of punishing informers.[1] It was therefore morally impossible, from the very nature of the thing, that those books could be forged.

Satisfactory as the preceding argument for the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament, arising from the impossibility of a forgery, unquestionably is,

2. *The direct and positive testimony arising from the* EXTERNAL *or* HISTORICAL EVIDENCE *is by no means inferior in decisiveness or importance.* This evidence is furnished by the testimony of ancient writers, who have quoted or alluded to the books of the New Testament, and also by ancient versions of the New Testament, in various languages, which are still extant. *The books of the New Testament are quoted or alluded to by a series of Christian writers, as well as by adversaries of the Christian faith, who may be traced back in regular succession from the present time to the apostolic age.*[2]

This sort of evidence, Dr. Paley has remarked, "is of all others the most unquestionable, the least liable to any practices of fraud, and *is not diminished by the lapse of ages.* Bishop Burnet, in the History of his own Times, inserts various extracts from Lord Clarendon's History. *One* such insertion is a proof that Lord Clarendon's History was extant at the time when Bishop Burnet wrote, that it had been read by Bishop Burnet, that it was received by Bishop Burnet as the work of Lord Clarendon, and also regarded by him as an authentic account of the transactions which it relates; and it will be a proof of these points a thousand years hence, or as long as the books exist."[3] This simple instance may serve to point out to a reader, who is little accustomed to such researches, the nature and value of the argument.

In examining the quotations from the New Testament, which are to be found in the writings of the first ecclesiastical writers (commonly termed the Fathers of the Christian church), the learned Professor Hug[4] has laid down the following principles, the consideration

[1] Dr. Ryan's Evidences of the Mosaic and Christian Codes, pp.150, 151. 8vo. Dublin, 1795. The argument above, briefly stated, is urged at length with much force and accuracy by Abbadie, in his Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tom. ii. pp. 39—45. Amsterdam, 1719.

[2] In the first edition of this work, the historical evidence for the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament was exhibited *chronologically* from the apostolic age down to the fourth century; but as the chronological series of that evidence has been cavilled at by the opponents of Christianity, it is now traced *backwards* from the fourth century to the apostolic age, for the weighty and satisfactory reasons (which do not admit of abridgment) assigned by Bishop Marsh, in his "Course of Lectures on Divinity," part v. pp. 11—13.

[3] Paley's Evidences, vol. i. p. 173.

[4] Cellérier, Essai d'une Introduction Critique au Nouveau Testament, pp. 17—19. Hug, Introduction to the Writings of the New Testament, by Dr. Wait, vol. i. pp. 40—44.

of which will be sufficient to solve nearly all the objections which have been made against their citations:—

1. The ancient Christian writers cite the Old Testament with greater exactness than the New Testament; because the former, being less generally known, required *positive* quotations rather than vague allusions, and perhaps also evinced more erudition in the person who appealed to its testimony.

2. In passages taken from the Historical Writers of the Old or New Testament, we seldom meet with the identical words of the author cited: but this does not prevent allusions to circumstances, or to the sense, in very many instances, from rendering evident both the origin of the passage and the design of the author.

3. Quotations from the didactic writings of the Old Testament are generally very exact, and accompanied with the name of the author quoted. In this case his name is, indeed, generally necessary.

4. In like manner, when quotations are made from the Epistles of the New Testament, the name of the author cited is generally given, especially when the passage is not literally stated.

5. The fathers often amplify sentences of Scripture, to which they allude; in which case they disregard the *words*, in order to develop the *ideas* of the sacred writers.

6. When Irenæus, and the fathers who followed him, relate the actions or discourses of Jesus Christ, they almost always appeal to *Him*, and not to the evangelist whom they copy. *The Lord says*—*The Lord hath done it*—are their expressions, even in those instances where the conformity of their writings with our copies of the original authors is not sufficiently striking to exclude all uncertainty respecting the source whence they drew the facts or sayings related by them. (This remark is particularly worthy of attention, because, of all the ancient fathers, Irenæus[1] is he who has rendered the strongest and most express testimony to the authenticity of our four Gospels, and who has consequently drawn from them the facts and discourses which he has related in his writings.)

7. Lastly, it must on no account be forgotten that the quotations of the fathers are not to be compared with *our* printed editions, or our *textus receptus*, but with the text of *their* church, and of the age in which they lived; which text was sometimes purer, though most frequently less correct than ours, and always exhibits diversities, in themselves indeed of little importance, but which nevertheless would be sufficient sometimes to conceal the phrase cited from readers who should not remember that circumstance.

For the reason above stated, we commence the series of testimonies to the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament, which are furnished by the quotations of ancient Christian writers, with the fathers of the *fourth century;* because from that century downwards, the works of Christian Writers are so full of references to the New Testament, that it becomes unnecessary to adduce their testimonies, especially as they would only prove that the books of

[1] The testimony of Irenæus is given in pp. 77, 78. *infra.*

Scripture *never* lost their character or authority with the Christian church. The witnesses to the genuineness of the books of the New Testament, in this century, are very numerous; but as it would extend this chapter to too great a length, were we to detail them all, it may suffice to remark, that we have not fewer than TEN distinct catalogues of these books.[1] Of these, *six* agree exactly with our present canon; namely, the lists of Athanasius (A. D. 315)[2], Epiphanius (A. D. 370)[3], Jerome (A. D. 392)[4], Rufinus (A. D. 390)[5], Augustine[6], Bishop of Hippo in Africa (A. D. 394), and of the forty-four bishops assembled in the third council of Carthage (at which Augustine was present, A. D. 397).[7] Of the other four catalogues, those of Cyril Bishop of Jerusalem (A. D. 340)[8], of the bishops at the synod of Laodicea (A. D. 364)[9], and of Gregory of Nazianzum, Bishop of Constantinople (A. D. 375)[10], are the same with our canon, excepting that the Revelation is omitted; and Philaster or Philastrius[11], Bishop of Brixia or Brescia (A. D. 380), in his list, omits the

[1] The catalogue of books of the New Testament given in the seventy-sixth (or, according to some critics, in the eighty-fifth) of the pseudo-APOSTOLIC CANONS, is here designedly omitted; those pretended canons being the forgeries of ages subsequent to the apostles. With regard to this particular canon, Dr. and Professor O. C. Krabbe, of Kiel (who in his "Dissertation on the Canons" has investigated the origin of every one, remarks with equal force and truth, that "scarcely any one of them bears upon itself, more openly than this, the vestiges of a late time. It is therefore easy to fix the age of its origin. This canon presents a catalogue of the sacred books of the New Testament, enumerating all those which it deems canonical..... Even the two Epistles of Clement [bishop of "the church of God which sojourneth at Rome," as he styles it in the commencement of his first Epistle to the Corinthians], and the [pseudo-Apostolical] constitutions, are set forth in it as being apostolical. If, now, we institute a comparison between the canon and the catalogue which Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, b. iii. c. 25., has given us, we readily perceive that our canon was not fabricated till the end of the fourth century, when the books just now mentioned were brought into the canon of the Sacred Scripture. And if we inquire why it was fabricated, the answer is easy and prompt,—that by its aid, spurious books might be commended." Dr. Chase's Edition of Whiston's English Version (revised from the Greek) of "the Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, and the Canons," with Krabbe's Prize Essay on their Origin, p. 496. (New York, 1848.) Mr. Westcott thinks that the seventy-sixth (or eighty-fifth) pseudo-apostolical canon "was drawn from Syrian sources, and probably dates from the sixth century." (Hist. of the Canon, p. 506.) "As a piece of evidence," he justly remarks, "it is of no value."

[2] The testimony of Athanasius will be found at full length in Dr. Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel History, part ii. Works, vol. iv. pp. 280—294. of the 8vo. edition of 1789, or vol. ii. pp. 388—406. of the 4to edition. The various testimonies, both from councils and fathers, adduced by Lardner, are fully stated and considered by Mr. Westcott, in his History of the Canon of the New Testament during the first four Centuries. Cambridge, 1855. 8vo. These testimonies may also be seen on a smaller scale in Professor Less's valuable work on "The Authenticity, uncorrupted Preservation, and Credibility of the New Testament," translated by Mr. Kingdon, 8vo. London, 1804; and especially in C. F. Schmidius's "Historia Antiqua et Vindicatio Canonis Sacri Veteris Novique Testamenti." 8vo. Lipsiæ, 1775.

[3] Lardner, 8vo. vol. iv. pp. 311—319.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 416—420.

[4] Ibid. 8vo. vol. v. pp. 1—74.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 531—572.

[5] Ibid. 8vo. vol. v. pp. 75—78.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 572—574.

[6] Ibid. 8vo. vol. v. pp. 81—123.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 576—599.

[7] Ibid. 8vo. vol. v. pp. 79, 80.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 574, 575.

[8] Ibid. 8vo. vol. iv. pp. 299—303.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 409—411.

[9] Canon 59. The canons of this council were, not long afterwards, received into the body of the canons of the universal church. Lardner, 8vo. vol. iv. pp. 308—311.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 414—416.

[10] Lardner, 8vo. vol. iv. pp. 406—411.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 469—472.

[11] Ibid. 8vo. vol. iv. pp. 499—501.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 522, 523.

Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Revelation, though he acknowledges both these books in other parts of his works.

Of these various catalogues, that of JEROME is the most remarkable. He was born about the middle of the fourth century, and was ordained presbyter by Paulinus, at Antioch, in the year 378, about which time he is placed by Bishop Marsh, Dr. Cave, and others, though Dr. Lardner (whose date we have followed) places him about the year 392, when he wrote his celebrated book of illustrious men. "It is well known that Jerome was the most learned of the Latin fathers; and he was peculiarly qualified, not only by his profound erudition, but by his extensive researches, his various travels, and his long residence in Palestine, to investigate the authenticity of the several books which compose the New Testament. Of these books he has given a catalogue in his Epistle to Paulinus, on the study of the Holy Scriptures.[1] He begins his catalogue (which is nearly at the close of the epistle) with the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John. The Acts of the Apostles he mentions as another work of St. Luke, whose praise is in the Gospel. He says that St. Paul wrote epistles to seven churches; these seven churches are such as we find in the titles of the Epistles of St. Paul contained in our present copies of the New Testament. Of the Epistle to the Hebrews he observes, that most persons (namely, in the Latin church) did not consider it as an epistle of St. Paul; but we shall presently see that his own opinion was different. He further states that St. Paul wrote to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. The seven Catholic epistles he ascribes to James, Peter, John, and Jude, and expressly says that they were apostles. And he concludes his catalogue with the remark, that the Revelation of John has as many mysteries as words. This catalogue accords with the books which we receive at present, with the exception of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The rejection of this Epistle is a fact which Jerome has not attempted to conceal; and therefore, as he confidently speaks of all the other books of the New Testament, his testimony is so much the more in their favour. As we are now concerned with a statement of facts, it would be foreign to our present purpose to inquire into the causes which induced the Latin church to reject the Epistle to the Hebrews. But whatever those causes may have been, they did not warrant the rejection of it, in the estimation of Jerome himself. For in his Catalogue of Ecclesiastical Writers, or, as it is frequently called, his Treatise of Illustrious Men, and in the article relating to St. Paul, Jerome expressly asserts that St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews. And in his Epistle to Dardanus[2], alluding to the then prevailing custom in the Latin church of rejecting the Epistle to the Hebrews, he adds, 'but we receive it;' and he assigns this powerful reason, which it is necessary to give in his own words, 'nequaquam *hujus* temporis *consuetudinem*, sed *veterum* scriptorum *auctoritatem* sequentes.'—To his catalogue of the books of the New Testament may be added his revision of the Latin version, which revision contained the same books as we have at present."[3] In this revision

[1] Tom. iv. part 2. col. 568. ed. Martianay. [2] Tom. ii. col. 608.

[3] Bp Marsh's Course of Lectures on the several Branches of Divinity, part v. pp. 20—22.

Jerome was employed by Damasus, then Bishop of Rome, to collate many ancient *Greek* copies of the New Testament, and by them to correct the Latin version then in use, wherever they appeared to disagree *materially* with the true original. This task, he tells us, he performed with great care in the four Gospels, about the year 384; and he made the same use of the Greek copies in his commentaries on St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, Titus, and Philemon, and most probably also in his commentaries on the other parts of the New Testament.

The next distinguished writer anterior to Jerome was EUSEBIUS, Bishop of Cæsarea, who flourished in the year 315,—a man of extraordinary learning, diligence, and judgment, and singularly studious in the Scriptures. He received the books of the New Testament nearly as we have them, and in his various writings has produced quotations from all, or nearly all of them. His chief work is his Ecclesiastical History, in which he records the history of Christianity from its commencement to his own time; and having diligently read the works of Christian antiquity, for the express purpose of ascertaining what writings had been received as the genuine productions of the apostles and evangelists, in the third, fourth, and twenty-fourth chapters of his third book, he has particularly treated on the various books of the New Testament; and in the twenty-fifth chapter he has delivered, not his own private opinion, but the *opinion of the church*, ἐκκλησιαστικὴ παράδοσις, the sum of what he had found in the writings of the primitive Christians. As the result of his inquiries, he reduces the books of the New Testament into the three following classes; viz.

I. *The acknowledged Divine Writings*, or those writings which were *universally* received as the genuine works of the persons whose names they bear. In this class Eusebius reckons, 1. The four Gospels; 2. The Acts of the Apostles; 3. The Epistles of Paul; 4. The first Epistle to John; 5. The first Epistle of Peter. The Revelation of John might also *perhaps* be placed in this class, because *some* think its authenticity incontrovertible, yet the *majority* leave the matter undetermined.

II. *The contradicted* Writings, on whose authenticity the ancients were *not unanimous*. According to Eusebius, even these have the *majority of voices* among the ancients in their favour. He expressly calls them γνωρίμων ὅμως τοῖς πολλοῖς, writings acknowledged *by most* to be genuine. A few doubted of their authenticity; and therefore Eusebius ranks them under the class of contested books. In this class he enumerates, of the writings of the New Testament, 1. The Epistle of James; 2. The Epistle of Jude; 3. The second Epistle of Peter; 4. The second and third Epistles of John. The Revelation of John, he adds, is also by some placed in this class.[1]

III. Writings confessedly *spurious*. Among these he enumerates

[1] For, in early times, some believed that this work was not composed by John the Apostle, but by a presbyter of the same name, or by some other person.

the Acts of Paul; the Shepherd of Hermas; the Revelation of Peter; the Epistle of Barnabas; the Doctrines of the Apostles; and the Gospel according to the Hebrews.

Besides these, Eusebius mentions certain books which may constitute a fourth class (for the twenty-fifth chapter of the third book of his Ecclesiastical History is not remarkably perspicuous); viz.

IV. Writings which had been *universally rejected* as *evidently spurious.* In this class he includes the Gospels of Peter, of Thomas, and of Matthias; the Acts of Andrew, of John, and of other apostles. These writings, says he, contain evident errors, are written in a style entirely different from that of the apostles, and have not been thought worthy of being mentioned by any one of the ancients.[1]

A few years before the time of Eusebius, or about the year 300, ARNOBIUS, a teacher of rhetoric at Sicca in Africa[2], and LACTANTIUS, his pupil[3], composed, among other works, elaborate vindications of the Christian religion, which prove their acquaintance with the writings of the New Testament, although they did not cite them by name, because they addressed their works to the Gentiles. Lactantius, indeed, assigns this very reason for his reserve; notwithstanding which, Dr. Lardner remarks, "He seems to show that the Christians of that time were so habituated to the language of Scripture, that it was not easy for them to avoid the use of it, whenever they discoursed upon things of a religious nature."

During the next preceding forty years, the imperfect remains of numerous writers[4] are still extant, in which they either cite the Historical Scriptures of the New Testament, or speak of them in terms of profound respect; but the testimony of VICTORINUS, Bishop of Pettaw in Germany, is particularly worthy of notice, on account of the remoteness of his situation from that of Origen and Cyprian, who were Africans. Victorinus wrote commentaries on different books of the Old Testament, an exposition of some passages of Matthew's Gospel, a commentary on the Apocalypse, and various controversial treatises against the heretics of his day; in which we have valuable and most explicit testimonies to almost every book of the New Testament.[5]

Of all the fathers who flourished in the *third century*, the most learned and laborious unquestionably was ORIGEN, who was born in Egypt A. D. 184 or 185, and died about the year 253. It is said of him, that he did not so much recommend Christianity by what he preached or wrote as by the general tenor of his life. So great, indeed, was the estimation in which he was held, even among the

[1] Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 24. Lardner, 8vo. vol. iv. pp. 200—275.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 355—395. Westcott, pp. 481—490.

[2] Lardner, 8vo. vol. iv. pp. 1—24.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 244—257.

[3] Ibid. 8vo. vol. iv. pp. 24—87.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 257—292.

[4] As Novatus, Rome, A. D. 251; Dionysius, Rome, A. D. 259; Commodian, A. D. 270; Anatolius, Laodicea, A. D. 270; Theognostus, A. D. 282; Methodius, Lycia, A. D. 290; and Phileas, Bishop of Thmuis in Egypt, A. D. 296. Accounts of these writers, and extracts from their testimonies to the New Testament, are collected and given at length by Dr. Lardner. (Works, vol. iii. 8vo. or vol. ii. 4to.)

[5] Lardner, 8vo. vol. iii. pp. 286—303.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 88—98.

heathen philosophers, that they dedicated their writings to him, and submitted them to his revisal.[1] Besides the critical labours of Origen upon the Scriptures, (which form a decisive testimony to their authenticity,) he wrote a three-fold exposition of all the books of the Scripture, viz. scholia or short notes, tomes or extensive commentaries, in which he employed all his learning, critical, sacred, and profane, and a variety of homilies and tracts for the people. Although a small portion only of his works has come down to us, yet in them he uniformly bears testimony to the authenticity of the New Testament, as we now have it; and he is the first writer who has given us a perfect catalogue of those books which Christians unanimously (or at least the greater part of them) have considered as the genuine and divinely inspired writings of the apostles.[2]

GREGORY, Bishop of Neo-Cæsarea[3], and DIONYSIUS, Bishop of Alexandria[4], were pupils of Origen; so that their testimonies to the New Testament, which are very numerous, are in fact but repetitions of his. In the writings of CYPRIAN, Bishop of Carthage, who flourished a few years after Origen, and suffered martyrdom A.D. 258, we have most copious quotations from almost all the books of the New Testament.[5]

Further, during the first thirty years of the third century, there are extant fragments of several writers, in all of which there is some reference to the books of the New Testament. Thus CAIUS, surnamed Romanus, who was a presbyter of the church of Rome[6], quotes all the epistles of Saint Paul as his genuine productions, except the Epistle to the Hebrews, which he has omitted to enumerate among the rest. "The undoubted writings of Hippolytus," Bishop of Portus Romanus, commonly termed HIPPOLYTUS PORTUENSIS, "contain quotations from all the acknowledged books, except the Epistle to Philemon, and the first Epistle to St. John."[7] AMMONIUS composed a Harmony of the Four Gospels[8], and JULIUS AFRICANUS endeavoured to remove the apparent contradictions in the genealogy of Jesus Christ as delivered by the evangelists Matthew and Luke.[9]

From the third century we now ascend to the *second*, in which flourished TERTULLIAN, a presbyter of the church of Carthage, who

[1] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c. 19.
[2] Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 442—544.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 519—575.
[3] Ibid. 8vo. vol. iii. pp. 25—57.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 591—608. Westcott, pp. 401—409.
[4] Ibid. 8vo. vol. iii. pp. 57—132.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 609—650.
[5] Ibid. 8vo. vol. iii. pp. 133—183.; 4to. vol. ii. pp. 3—30.
[6] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c. 20. Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 372—379.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 481—484. A critical edition of the Fragment of Caius will be found in Dr. Routh's Reliquiæ Sacræ, vol. ii. pp. 1—32. See also Dr. Routh's fourth volume, pp. 1—37. A translation of the same fragment will be found in vol. i. pp. 159—161. of Sermons on the Evidences of Christianity by the Rev. Daniel Wilson, M.A. (late Bishop of Calcutta).
[7] Westcott, on the Canon, p. 430. See also Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 397—413.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 495—503.
[8] Ibid. 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 413—430.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 503—513.
[9] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 7. Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 431—441.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 513—518.

was born in the year 160, and died about the year 220. He became a Montanist about the year 200; and Christian writers have commonly distinguished between what he wrote before that period, and what he published afterwards. His testimony, however, to the authority of the canonical Scriptures, both before and after he embraced the tenets of Montanus, is exactly the same. He uniformly recognises the four Gospels, as written by the evangelists to whom we ascribe them; distinguishing Matthew and John as apostles, and Mark and Luke as apostolical men; and asserting the authority of their writings as inspired books, acknowledged by the Christian church from their orignal date. His works are filled with quotations by *name,* and with long extracts from all the writings of the New Testament, except the Epistle of James, the second Epistle of Peter, and the second and third Epistles of John. But if an author does not profess to give a complete catalogue of the books of the New Testament, his mere silence in regard to any book is no argument against it. Dr. Lardner has observed, that the quotations from the small volume of the New Testament, by Tertullian, are both longer and more numerous than the quotations are from all the works of Cicero, in writers of all characters, for several ages. Further, Tertullian has expressly affirmed that, when he wrote, the Christian Scriptures were open to the inspection of all the world, both Christians and heathens, without exception. And it also appears that in his time there was already a Latin version of some part of the New Testament, if not of the whole of it; for, at least in one instance, he appeals from the language of such version to the authority of the authentic copies in Greek.[1]

Contemporary with Tertullian was CLEMENT of Alexandria, who gives an account of the order in which the four Gospels were written, and quotes almost all the books of the New Testament so often by name, and so amply, that to extract his citations would fill a large portion of this volume. "His very numerous quotations from the Gospels are, at the present day, an important means of settling their true text."[2] As Clement was the preceptor of Origen, and travelled in quest of authentic information, and did not give his assent to the Scriptures until he had accurately examined them, his testimony to their authenticity possesses the greater weight.[3]

THEOPHILUS, Bishop of Antioch, A.D. 181, in his three books to Autolycus, could only mention the Scriptures occasionally, from the particular object he had in view; but he has evident allusions to the Gospels of Matthew and John, the Epistle to the Romans, and the first Epistle to Timothy.[4]

ATHENAGORAS, a philosopher and a native of Athens, who flou-

[1] Sciamus plane non sic esse in *Græco authentico.* Tertullian de Monog. c. 11. Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 250—287.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 416—436. Sir H. M. Wellwood's Discourses on the Evidences of the Jewish and Christian Revelation, pp. 230—232.

[2] Norton's Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels, vol. i. p. 90.

[3] Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 206—243.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 392—412.

[4] Ibid. 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 190—202.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 383—389.

rished about the year 180, is the most polished and elegant author of Christian antiquity. In his Apology for the Christians, presented to the emperor Marcus Antoninus, and in his Treatise on the Resurrection of the Dead, he has indisputably quoted the Gospels of Matthew and John, the Epistles to the Romans, and the two Epistles to the Corinthians.[1]

Prior to these writers was IRENÆUS, who succeeded the martyr Pothinus in the bishopric of Lyons about the year 170, or perhaps a few years later. His testimony to the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament is the more important and valuable, because he was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John, and had also conversed with many others who had been instructed by the apostles and immediate disciples of Jesus Christ. Though he wrote many works, his five books against heresies are all that remain; in these he has shown himself to be well acquainted with heathen authors, and the absurd and intricate notions of the heretics, as well as with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Though he has nowhere given us a professed catalogue of the books of the New Testament, we learn from his treatise that he received as authentic and canonical Scriptures, and ascribed to the persons whose names they bear, the four Gospels (to which he appeals continually, and the authors of which he describes, together with the occasions on which they were written), the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistle to the Romans, the Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, the first and second Epistles to the Thessalonians, the two Epistles to Timothy, the Epistle to Titus (all which Epistles he has repeatedly ascribed to Paul), the two Epistles of Peter, and the first and second Epistles of John. Irenæus has alluded to the Epistle to the Hebrews, but he is silent concerning the question whether that Epistle was written by Paul. We are not, however, as Bishop Marsh has well observed, to attach to his silence more importance than it deserves. "Irenæus, though born a Greek, was transplanted to the *Latin* church, which then *rejected* the Epistle to the Hebrews. If, therefore, he had quoted it as authority in *controversial* writings, he would have afforded his adversaries this ready answer, that he produced as authority what was not allowed by his own church. And since he has nowhere asserted that Saint Paul was *not* the author of that Epistle, his mere silence argues rather the *custom* of the Latin church (as it is termed by Jerome) than the opinion of Irenæus himself."[2] He has quoted the Epistle of James once, and to the book of Revelation his testimony is clear and positive; he has not only cited it very often, but has expressly ascribed it to the apostle John, and has distinctly spoken of the exact and ancient copies of this book, as being confirmed by the agreeing testimony of those who had personally conversed with John himself.

In short, we have the testimony of Irenæus, in one form or other, to every one of the books of the New Testament, except the Epistle

[1] Ibid. 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 180—187.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 377—381.
[2] Bp. Marsh's Lectures, part v. p. 41.

to Philemon, the third Epistle of John, and the Epistle of Jude; which, as they contain no point of doctrine, could not afford any matter for quotations in the particular controversies in which Irenæus was engaged, whose writings (it must be recollected) were wholly controversial.

Considering the age in which he lived, and his access to the original sources of information, the testimony of Irenæus to the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament gives to such of his writings as are extant a perpetual interest and value in the Christian church; for his "quotations are so numerous, and many of them are so long, as to afford undoubted evidence that the books of the New Testament, which were known to the disciples of Polycarp, are the *same* books which have descended to the present age." In addition to the preceding remarks, it may be stated that Irenæus mentions "*the Code of the New Testament as well as the Old,*" and calls the one as well as the other, "*the Oracles of God,* and *Writings dictated by his Word and Spirit.*"[1]

The MURATORIAN CANON is an imperfect fragment of an unknown author, who, from internal evidence, must have lived about A.D. 170. It derives its name from the learned antiquary Luigi Antonio Muratori, by whom it was discovered in a very ancient manuscript in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, and published in 1740 in the third volume of his "Antiquitates Italicæ Medii Ævi." This important, though unhappily mutilated fragment, acknowledges every book in our New Testament canon, except that there is no special enumeration of 1 Peter and 1 John, and that the Epistles of James, 2 Peter, and the Epistle to the Hebrews are omitted. One book only is added to this list, "the Apocalypse of Peter, which" (it is added) "some of our [body] will not have read in the church."[2]

About the year 170, during the reign of Marcus Antoninus, the Christians in Gaul suffered a terrible persecution, particularly at Vienne and Lyons, whence they sent an affecting narrative to their brethren in Asia. In this epistle, of which Eusebius has preserved the greater part, there are exact references to the Gospels of Luke and John, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles to the Romans, Ephesians, Philippians, 1 Timothy, 1 Peter, 1 John, and the Revelation of St. John.[3] In this persecution Pothinus, Bishop of Lyons, the predecessor of Irenæus, was put to death.

At this time also flourished MELITO, Bishop of Sardis, in Lydia, whom some writers have conjectured (but without any authority from Christian antiquity) to be the angel of the church of Sardis, to whom the epistle is directed in Rev. iii. 1—6. He appears to have been a

[1] Bp. Marsh's Lectures, part v. p. 43. Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 153—180.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 363—377. Wellwood's Discourses, p. 227.

[2] "Quam quidam ex nostris legi in ecclesia nolunt." The best edition of the Muratorian canon is that of the Rev. B. F. Westcott, in his History of the Canon of the New Testament, pp. 557—564., from whose critical analysis of its contents (pp. 235—245.) the above particulars are condensed. The Muratorian canon is also printed in Dr. Routh's Reliquiæ Sacræ, vol. i. pp. 393—434. (second edition), with valuable notes.

[3] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 1—4. Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 148—153.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 360—362.

voluminous writer, as the titles of thirteen treatises of his have been transmitted to us, though none of them have reached our times, except a few fragments preserved by Eusebius and Jerome. He travelled into the East, to ascertain the Jewish canon, and left a catalogue of the books of the Old Testament. From the language cited from him with regard to the *Old* Testament, as distinguished from the New, there is reason to conclude that there was *then* extant a volume or collection of books, called the *New Testament*, containing the writings of apostles and apostolical men. One of Melito's treatises was a commentary on the Revelation of Saint John.[1]

HEGESIPPUS, who was a converted Jew, was born in the beginning of the second century, and, according to the Alexandrian Chronicle, died in the reign of the emperor Commodus. He relates that, in his journey from Palestine to Rome, he conversed with many bishops, all of whom held one and the same doctrine; and that "in every city the same doctrine was taught, which the law and the prophets, and the Lord teacheth;" in which passage, by "*the Lord*," he must mean the Scriptures of the New Testament, which he considered as containing the very doctrine taught and preached by Jesus Christ.[2]

TATIAN flourished about the year 172; he was converted from heathenism to Christianity by reading the books of the Old Testament, and by reflecting on the corruptions and absurdities of Gentilism. After the death of Justin Martyr, whose follower or pupil he is said to have been, Tatian adopted various absurd and heretical tenets, which are detailed by ecclesiastical historians. He composed a Harmony of the Gospels, called ΔΙΑ ΤΕΣΣΑΡΩΝ, *of the four;* in which he is charged with making alterations and omissions in such passages of the Gospels as opposed his heretical tenets. The fragments of this harmony, which have been preserved by Clement of Alexandria who wrote against Tatian, prove that it was compiled from the same Gospels which we now have, and recognise as canonical.[3] The identity of the Gospels, harmonised by the latter with our Gospels, is further proved by the *fact* that a Greek manuscript of the Gospels in the British Museum (Codex Harleianus 5647) contains a scholium, the object of which is to support a various reading by the authority of Tatian.[4] Eusebius's account of TATIAN'S Harmony further proves that in the earliest times there were four Gospels, and only four, which were in esteem with the Christians.

[1] Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 146—148.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 358, 359. On the testimony of Hegesippus, see Mr. Westcott, on the Canon of the New Testament, pp. 228—235.

[2] Ibid. 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 141—145.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 355—358.

[3] Clement. Alexandrin. Stromata, lib. iii. c. 12, 13. Ephrem the Syrian wrote a Commentary on Tatian's work, which was known to the writers of the Syrian church; one of whom, Dionysius Barsalibæus, tells us from this commentary, that the diatessaron of Tatian was a harmony composed of our four Gospels. Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrus in Syria in the fourth century, mentions the alterations and excisions made by Tatian; and adds that he saw the work, which in other respects was correct, generally used by the orthodox themselves, from whom he collected and took away two hundred copies, in order to substitute for them others which had not been altered. Theodoret. Hæret. Fab. l. 1. c. 20. cited in Cellérier's Introduction au Nouv. Test. p. 23.

[4] Cellérier, Introd. au Nouv. Test. p. 23.

His oration or discourse against the Gentiles, which is said to have been the most useful of all his writings, contains several quotations from, and allusions to, the Gospels, especially of Matthew and John.[1]

JUSTIN, surnamed the MARTYR, from his having sealed with his blood his confession of the truth of the Christian religion, was one of the most learned fathers of the second century. He was born at Sichem, or Flavia Neapolis, a city of Samaria in Palestine, about the year 89. He was converted to Christianity, A. D. 133, flourished chiefly from the year 140 and afterwards, and suffered martyrdom in 164 or 167. He wrote several pieces, of which only his two apologies for the Christians, one addressed to the emperor Titus Antoninus Pius, and the other to the emperor Marcus Antoninus and the senate and people of Rome (this last is not entire), and his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, have been preserved. From this dialogue we learn, that before his conversion, Justin had carefully studied the Stoic, Pythagorean, and Platonic systems of philosophy; and that he embraced Christianity at last, as the only safe and useful philosophy. The sincerity, learning, and antiquity of Justin, therefore, constitute him a witness of the highest importance. He has numerous quotations from, as well as allusions to, the four Gospels, which he uniformly represents as containing the genuine and authentic accounts of Jesus Christ and of his doctrine. He terms them, "*Memoirs*," or commentaries, "*Memoirs of the Apostles*," "*Christ's Memoirs;*" "*Memoirs of the Apostles and their Companions*, who have written the history of all things concerning our Saviour Jesus Christ;" by which he evidently means the Gospels of Matthew and John, of Mark and Luke. Further, in his first apology he tells us, that the memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets were read and expounded in the Christian assemblies for public worship: whence it is evident that the Gospels were at that time well known in the world, and not designedly concealed from any one. The writings of Justin also contain express references to, or quotations from, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistle to the Romans, the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, the Epistle of Peter, and the book of Revelation, which he expressly says was written by "John, one of the apostles of Christ."[2]

Anterior to Justin, was PAPIAS, Bishop of Hierapolis in Asia, whose public life is placed between the years 110 and 116. He was well acquainted with Polycarp and John the presbyter or elder, both of them apostolical men, if not with the apostle John himself; consequently he had access to the best sources of information. He bears express testimony to the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, which

[1] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. c. 29. Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 135—140.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 353—355. Westcott, pp. 354—363.

[2] Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 115—129.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 341—349. That Justin used and quoted the same canonical gospels which we have, has been demonstrated, from actual collation, by Dr. G. B. Winer, in a dissertation published in 1819, and reprinted in E. F. C. Rosenmüller's Commentationes Theologicæ, vol. i. pp. 221—252. Lipsiæ, 1825. 8vo. The quotations of Justin are examined at length by Mr. Westcott, on the Canon, pp. 109—206., and by Semisch, in his Life of Justin, vol. i. pp. 252—278. (Edinburgh, 1843.)

he ascribes to those evangelists; he has also quoted the first Epistle of Peter and the first Epistle of John, and alludes to the Acts of the Apostles, as well as to the book of Revelation.

We have now traced the external evidence for the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament, from the present time backward to the second century, without the aid of the apostolic fathers (that is, of those who were the immediate contemporaries or disciples, acquaintances or successors of the apostles), or of any other writers whose testimony can in any way be questioned. "But though we have sufficient proof, independently of the apostolic fathers, there is no reason for our rejecting them altogether as useless. When the passages in their writings, which are supposed only from their *resemblance* to have been borrowed from corresponding passages in the Gospels or other books, are brought forward, as usual, in the first instance, we are then indeed lost in uncertainty, whether *such* passages were borrowed from the New Testament or not. But when we have *already* proved that such books of the New Testament, as they are supposed to have quoted, were then in *existence*, and therefore *might* have been quoted by them, it becomes much more credible that those books really *were* quoted by them. It is true, that if the validity of a witness must be previously established by means which prove of *themselves* what the *witness* is intended to prove, the importance of his evidence is thereby diminished. But in the present case we are not so much concerned with the obtaining of *more* evidence, which is quite unnecessary, as with showing that the testimony of the apostolic fathers, as far as it goes, is *consistent* with the evidence already produced."[1] There are, however, some books of the New Testament, mentioned by name, and others which are so expressly alluded to by the apostolic fathers as to prove most clearly that such writings must have been extant in their time; and although (as above remarked) their testimony is not absolutely necessary to complete the series of evidence for the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament, yet it may be satisfactory to the reader to see their attestations; because, independently of their quotations from the books of the New Testament, and of their allusions to them, the apostolic fathers were the chief persons from whom the writers, that immediately succeeded them, received the information which they have transmitted to us, concerning the authors, and the general reception of those books. "The apostolic fathers wrote at that very time when the oral teaching of the apostles was still sounding in the ears of Christendom. Hence their great value. They represent to us the feelings of the primitive church as an *audience*. They are an echo of the voice of Christ. They are contemporary and independent witnesses of Scripture; [and] they show us that what is there taught was believed in the apostolic church."[2] The testimony, therefore, of these apostolical men forms an important link in that unbroken chain of evidence which was intended for the conviction of the latest ages: and though their works might at first have been published anony-

[1] Bishop Marsh's Lectures, part v. p. 65.
[2] Dr. Wordsworth's Lectures on the Canon, &c. p. 140.

mously from a dread of persecution, yet the authors of them were well known at that time, nor do we find any difference among the ancients concerning them. The antiquity of their writings being admitted, it is immaterial whether they were written by those persons whose names they bear, or not; especially as it is clear from their contents, that the authors of them were pious and good men. For the writings in question were pious and moral, worthy of the apostolical age, and of apostolical men; and are not calculated to serve any party, nor to countenance any opinion of the then existing sects of philosophy. They are also written in a style of evangelical simplicity, in a spirit of peace, charity, and resignation, and without that display of learning which occurs in the writings of the fathers of the second and third centuries.[1]

The acknowledged apostolic fathers are four[2] in number, viz. Barnabas, Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp.

1. BARNABAS, the fellow-labourer of Paul (Acts xiii. 2, 3. 46, 47., 1 Cor. ix. 6.), who is also expressly styled an apostle (Acts xiv. 14.), is the reputed author of an epistle that was held in the greatest esteem by the ancients, and which is still extant. In this epistle, though no book of the New Testament is expressly named in it, yet there are to be found expressions which are identically the same that occur in the Gospel of Matthew; and one in particular, which is introduced with the formula, "*it is written*," which was used by the Jews when they cited their sacred books. The epistle of Barnabas further contains the exact words of several other texts of the New Testament, and there are allusions to some others: it also contains many phrases and reasonings used by the apostle Paul, whom the author resembles, as his fellow-labourer, without copying him. It is to be observed, that Barnabas cites, or alludes to, many more passages out of the Old Testament than from the New; which is to be attributed to the time and character of the writer, who was a Jew, and who argued chiefly with Jews.[3]

2. CLEMENT Bishop of Rome, and a fellow-labourer of the apostle

[1] The best collective edition of the writings of the apostolic fathers (to which the references in the following pages are made) is to be found in the work entitled *SS. Patrum, qui temporibus apostolicis floruerunt, Barnabæ, Clementis, Hermæ, Ignatii, Polycarpi, Opera vera et supposititia; una cum Clementis, Ignatii, Polycarpi, Actis et Martyriis. J. B. Cotelerius Soc. Sorbon. Theol. ex MSS. Codd. eruit, versionibusque et notis illustravit. Recensuit, notasque adjecit, Joannes Clericus.* 2 vols. folio. Amst. 1724. An excellent English translation of the genuine writings of the apostolic fathers was made by Archbishop Wake, towards the close of the seventeenth century, which has since been repeatedly printed.

[2] HERMAS, whom Origen in the third century first conjectured to be the contemporary of St. Paul, by whom he is supposed to be mentioned in Rom. xvi. 14., is designedly omitted. A work in three books, entitled the "*Pastor*" or "*Shepherd*," has hitherto been ascribed to him, and has been supposed to be written towards the close of the first century: it was originally written in Greek, though now extant only in a Latin version. As there is no external evidence to prove the genuineness of this book, "internal evidence alone" (Mr. Westcott remarks) "is sufficient to prove that the 'Shepherd' could not have been written in the apostolic age. The whole tone and bearing shows that it is of the same date as Montanism," that is, between the middle and latter end of the second century; "and the view which it opens of church discipline, government, and ordinances, can scarcely belong to an earlier period." Westcott, on the Canon, p. 220. In pp. 221—227. the allusions to certain books of the New Testament are critically examined.

[3] Cotelerii Patres Apostolici, vol. i. pp. 15—66. Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 12—22.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 283—289. Dr. Lardner, however, is of opinion that it cannot be said with certainty, that Barnabas referred to any books of the New Testament; "nor," he adds,

Paul (Phil. iv. 3.), wrote an epistle in Greek (which has not come down to us entire), in the name of the church at Rome, to the church at Corinth, in order to compose certain dissensions that prevailed there. In this epistle there are several passages which exhibit the words of Christ as they stand in the Gospels, without mentioning them as quotations, agreeably to the usage which then generally prevailed. He also cites or alludes to most of the Epistles. It is generally supposed that Clement was ordained Bishop of the church at Rome A. D. 91 (though the order of his episcopate is disputed), and that he died in the third year of the reign of Trajan, A. D. 100.[1]

3. IGNATIUS was Bishop of the church at Antioch, A. D. 70, and suffered martyrdom A.D. 107, or, according to some accounts, A. D. 116. If (as some have supposed) he was not one of the little children whom Jesus took up in his arms and blessed, it is certain that he conversed familiarly with the apostles, and was perfectly acquainted with their doctrine. Several Greek epistles are extant bearing the name of Ignatius, of which the shorter only have hitherto been received as genuine: but the Rev. W. Cureton's discovery of the Syriac Version of these epistles (three very ancient Manuscripts of which are in the Library of the British Museum) has rendered it certain that even these shorter epistles have been interpolated.[2] In this version and its corresponding Greek text Ignatius has quoted or alluded to the Gospels of Matthew and John, to the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, and to the first Epistle of John.[3]

4. POLYCARP was an immediate disciple of the apostle John, by whom he was also appointed Bishop of the church at Smyrna. He had conversed with many who had seen Jesus Christ, and is supposed to have been the "angel of the church in Smyrna," to whom the epistle in the Revelation is addressed. He suffered martyrdom about the year 166. Of the various writings which he is recorded to have left, only one short epistle remains; which "contains far more references to the writings of the New Testament than any other work of the first age." (Dr. Lardner has collected nearly forty allusions to the different books of the New Testament.[4]) And

"ought it to be reckoned strange that a man, who was contemporary with the apostles, and had the same spirit and like gifts with them, if he was not an apostle himself, should often reason and argue like them, without quoting their writings or referring to them." Works, 8vo vol. v. p. 353.; 4to. vol. iii. p. 99. The propriety of considering Barnabas as a testimony for the authenticity of the New Testament is also questioned by Prof. Less, in his work on the "Authenticity of the New Testament," translated by Mr. Kingdon, pp. 33—40. Should the reader coincide in opinion with these eminent critics, the absence of Barnabas's testimony will not affect the general argument, which is so strongly supported by the undisputed evidence of others of his contemporaries.

[1] Lardner, 8vo. vol. i. pp. 22—47.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 289—303. Cotelerius, vol. i. pp. 185—189. Westcott, on the Canon, pp. 27—34.

[2] For a full account of the Syriac Version of the Ignatian Epistles, the reader is necessarily referred to Mr. Cureton's Corpus Ignatianum, pp. i.—lxxxvii. (London, 1849.) On the testimony of Ignatius, see also Mr. Westcott, on the Canon, pp. 34—43.

[3] In Ignatius's Epistle to Polycarp, Matt. x. 16. is quoted (Corpus Ignatianum, pp. 3, 4. and 227.); and there are allusions to Col. iv. 2. and 1 John ii. 25. John vi. 51. is alluded to in the Epistle to the Romans (Corp. Ign. pp. 51, 52. and 231.); and Eph. v. 1. is alluded to in the Epistle to the Ephesians (Corp. Ign. pp. 30, 31. and 229.—Dr. Lardner, has given the passages from the hitherto reputed shorter Greek Epistles of Ignatius which cite or allude to the New Testament. Works, vol. ii. pp. 65—85. 8vo.; or vol. i. pp. 313—325.

[4] The Greek epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians is not entire. It is given in Cote-

still, with one exception, all the phrases which Polycarp borrows, are inwoven into the texture of his letter without any sign of quotation. In other cases it is possible to assign verbal coincidences to accident; but Polycarp's use of scriptural language is so frequent, that it is wholly unreasonable to doubt that he was acquainted with the chief parts of our canon; and the mode in which this familiarity is shown serves to justify the conclusion that the scriptural language of other books, in which it occurs more scantily, implies a like knowledge of the apostolic writings."[1]

On the preceding testimonies of the apostolic fathers, we may remark, that, without any professed intention to ascertain the canon of the New Testament, they "have most effectually ascertained it, by their quotations from the several books which it contains, or by their explicit references to them, as the authentic Scriptures received and relied on as inspired oracles by the whole Christian church. They most frequently use the same words which are still read in the New Testament; and, even when they appear to have quoted from memory, without intending to confine themselves to the same language, or to have merely referred to the Scriptures, without professing to quote them, it is clear that they had precisely the same texts in their view which are still found in the books of the New Testament. But, what is of chief importance on this subject, every competent judge of their writings must perceive, on the one hand, that, in all the questions which occurred to them, either in doctrine or morals, they uniformly appealed to the same Scriptures which are in our possession; and, on the other hand, that they were universally accustomed to refer to all the books of the New Testament containing what related to the subjects which they were led to discuss, without appearing to have intentionally omitted any of them. All the inspired books, or the same texts, are not quoted by every writer; as the subject of the Epistle to Philemon could not be so frequently appealed to, as the doctrine of larger and more argumentative epistles. They had no intention to record the particulars of the canon, either of the Old or of the New Testament, not having been sufficiently aware of the importance of their testimony to succeeding ages; though the facts which they have furnished to establish it, incidentally or occasionally introduced in their writings, are not on this account less intelligible or important, but, on the contrary, derive a great part of their weight and value from this circumstance: and their united and unintentional testimony, given in this form, is certainly more decisive of the original authority assigned to the Scriptures referred to, than a precise list of them, or a professed dissertation from any individual to prove their authenticity, would have been. They uniformly quote and allude to them, with the respect and reverence due to inspired writings: and they describe them as 'Scriptures,' as 'Sacred Scriptures,' and as 'the Oracles of the Lord.' There is indeed good reason to conclude, not only from the multiplicity of references, but from the language employed by the apostolical fathers in making their quotations, that

lerius, vol. i. pp. 186—189. and the entire Latin epistle in pp. 190, 191. Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 86—100.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 325—333.

[1] Westcott, on the Canon, p. 44.

the books of the New Testament were not only generally received, and in common use in the Christian churches, but that at least the greater part of them had been collected and circulated in one volume before the end of the first, or in the very beginning of the second century." [1]

Lastly, we have evidence that some part of the New Testament was cited *by contemporary apostles themselves.*

Thus, Paul has the following sentence in 1 Tim. v. 18., *The labourer is worthy of his reward,* which occurs only in Luke's Gospel (x. 7.); whence we conclude that this was extant at the time the apostle wrote his Epistle to Timothy; and that he regarded the book which he quoted as of the same authority with the Old Testament. And James (ii. 8.) evidently refers to Matt. xxii. 39., when he says, *If ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture,* "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," *ye* do well. In further illustration of this testimony it may be observed, that as the apostles enjoyed miraculous gifts, particularly the gift of discerning spirits, they very early acknowledged the inspiration of one another's writings, and considered them on the same footing with the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Thus Peter, speaking of Paul's Epistles, says (2 Pet. iii. 16.), that the "*unteachable and unstable wrest them, as they also do the* OTHER SCRIPTURES, *unto their own destruction.*"

In reviewing the body of evidence which has now been stated, it is a consideration of great importance, that the witnesses lived at different times, and in countries widely remote from one another: Clement flourished at Rome, Ignatius at Antioch, Polycarp at Smyrna, Justin Martyr in Syria, Irenæus in France, Athenagoras at Athens, Theophilus at Antioch, Clement and Origen at Alexandria, Tertullian at Carthage, and Augustine at Hippo, both in Africa, and, to mention no more, Eusebius at Cæsarea. Philosophers, rhetoricians, and divines, men of acuteness and learning, all concur to prove that the books of the New Testament were equally well known in distant countries, and received as authentic, by men who had no intercourse with one another.

But the evidence for the authenticity of the New Testament, to be derived from the HERETICAL WRITERS of the first three centuries, is still more important than even that of the orthodox fathers. It was the practice of the former, not only to falsify or misrepresent particular passages, but to erase such as were not reconcileable with their peculiar tenets. Now this very circumstance, as Michaelis [2] most forcibly observes, is a positive proof that they considered the New Testament to be a genuine work of the apostles. They might deny an apostle to be an infallible teacher, and therefore banish his writings from the sacred canon; but they nowhere contend that the apostle is not the author of the book or books which bear his name.

Thus from the quotations made by Hippolytus Bishop of Portus from "*The Great Announcement,*" attributed to SIMON MAGUS, the contemporary of the apostles and founder of the sect of the Simonians, it is evident that that book contains "coincidences with words

[1] Sir H. M. Wellwood's Discourses on the Evidence of the Jewish and Christian Revelations, pp. 215—217.
[2] Introduction to the New Testament, vol. i. p. 35.

recorded in the Gospel of St. Matthew, and probably with a passage in the Gospel of St. John. Reference is also made to the first Epistle to the Corinthians in terms which proved that it was placed by the author on the same footing as the books of the Old Testament."[1]

Again, CERINTHUS (who was contemporary with the apostle John) maintained the necessity of circumcision, and the observance of the Mosaic law; and because Paul delivered a contrary doctrine in his epistles, which are cited, Cerinthus and his followers denied that he was a divine apostle. Paul's Epistles therefore — the very same that we now have — were extant in the first century, and were acknowledged to be his by the Cerinthians. And as this sect received and approved the Gospel of Matthew, because it did not contradict their tenets, it is consequently evident that his Gospel was likewise extant in the first century.[2]

"The Christian OPHITES, whom Hippolytus describes[3], appear to have been the first who assumed the title of Gnostics. They professed to derive their doctrines, through Mariamne, from James the Lord's Brother. . . . . Their whole system shows an intimate familiarity with the language of the New Testament Scriptures. The passages given from their books contain clear references to the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Luke, and St. John, and to the Epistles of St. Paul to the Romans, the Corinthians (i. ii.), the Ephesians, and the Galatians, and probably to the Epistle to the Hebrews."[4]

In the same age also the EBIONITES rejected all the Epistles of Paul, and called him an apostate, because he departed from the Levitical law; and they adopted the Gospel of Matthew, which, however, they corrupted by various alterations and additions. This proves that Matthew's Gospel was then published, and that Paul's Epistles were then known.[5]

In the following century, the Basilidians, Valentinians, and other heretics, who altered or rejected various parts of the New Testament, in order to accommodate them to their respective tenets, are satisfactory testimony to the genuineness of such books as they have quoted or alluded to. With regard to BASILIDES, in particular, (of whose personal history very little is known,) his testimony to our "acknowledged" books is comprehensive and clear. In the few pages of his writings which remain there are certain references to the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Luke, and St. John, and to the Epistles of St. Paul to the Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians, and probably to the first Epistle to Timothy. In addition to this, he appears to have used the first Epistle of St. Peter."[6]

But, among the heretics who erased and altered passages of Scripture, to make it agree with their doctrines, we may especially instance MARCION, who flourished in the beginning of the second

[1] Hippolytus adversus Hæreses, lib. vi. c. 9. Westcott, on the Canon, pp. 302, 303.

[2] For an account of the Cerinthians, see Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 28. Lardner's Works, 8vo. vol. ix. pp. 319—330.; 4to. vol. iv. pp. 564—571. Westcott, on the Canon, pp. 305—312.

[3] Adv. Hæreses, lib. v. c. 6.

[4] Westcott, on the Canon, p. 313.

[5] Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 27. Michaelis, vol. i. p. 37.

[6] Westcott, on the Canon, p. 323.

century. He lived therefore in an age when he could easily have discovered if the writings of the New Testament had been forged; and as he was greatly incensed against the orthodox Christians, who had excommunicated him, if such a forgery had been committed, most unquestionably he would not have failed to make a discovery that would have afforded him the most ample means of triumph. He had likewise the experience derived from an acquaintance with foreign countries, having travelled from Sinope, his native place, to Rome (where he afterwards resided), in order to procure a repeal of the sentence of excommunication that had been denounced against him. But, throughout the vast intermediate country between those two places, he was unable to discover the smallest trace of the New Testament being a forgery. Thus frustrated, he affirmed that the Gospel of Matthew, the Epistle to the Hebrews, with those of Peter and James, as well as the Old Testament in general, were writings, not for Christians, but for Jews. He published a new recension of the Gospel of Luke with numerous omissions and variations from the received text, and also of the first ten Epistles of Paul, in which Epiphanius has charged him with altering every passage that contradicted his own opinions; but, as many of these are what modern critics call various readings, this assertion of Epiphanius must be received with caution. The conduct of Marcion, however, proves that the above-mentioned books of the New Testament did then exist, and were acknowledged to be the works of the authors whose names they bear. The testimony to be drawn from this view of the subject, in favour of the books of the New Testament, is very strong. In consequence of Marcion's rejecting some books *entirely*, and mutilating others, the ancient Christians were led to examine into the evidence for these sacred writings, and to collate copies of them, and on this account to speak very frequently in their works, as well of whole books as of particular passages; and thus we, who live in a later age, are enabled to authenticate these books, and to arrive at the genuine reading of many texts, in a better manner than we otherwise could have done.[1]

It were easy to adduce other instances from the ancient heretics, if the preceding were insufficient; we therefore conclude this head of evidence with the following summary of the learned and accurate Dr. Lardner[2]; — "Noëtus," says he, "Paul of Samosata, Sabellius, Marcellus, Photinus, the Novatians, Donatists, Manicheans, Priscillianists, besides Artemon, the Audians, the Arians[3], and divers others, all received most, or all of the same books of the New Testament which the Catholics received; and agreed in the same respect for them, as being written by apostles, or their disciples and companions."

We now come to the evidence of JEWISH and HEATHEN ADVERSARIES in favour of the authenticity of the New Testament,

[1] For an ample account of Marcion and his tenets, see Dr. Lardner's History of Heretics, chap. 10. Works, 8vo. vol. ix. pp. 358—415.; 4to. vol. iv. pp. 588—624. Michaelis, vol. i. pp. 37—39. Westcott, on the Canon, pp. 345—363.

[2] In the General Review of his Credibility of the Gospel History. Works, 8vo vol. v. p. 349.; 4to. vol. iii. p. 96.

[3] For accounts of these various sects, see their respective titles in the fifth index to Dr. Lardner's works.

which is equally important with the testimonies of the ancient heretics. As, however, the testimonies of the Jewish writers apply as much to the credibility of the New Testament, as to its authenticity, and are therefore noticed in the following chapter, we shall at present adduce only the testimonies afforded by heathen adversaries of the first four centuries; and it is worthy of remark, that, from a very early period of Christianity, writers can be produced who considered the New Testament as the work of the apostles and evangelists: and Chrysostom remarks, with equal force and justice[1], that Celsus and Porphyry, two enemies of the Christian religion, are powerful witnesses for the antiquity of the New Testament, since they could not have argued against the tenets of the Gospel, if it had not existed in that early period.

1. Celsus, an Epicurean philosopher, who flourished towards the close of the second century, wrote a work against Christianity, intitled Ἀληθὴς Λόγος, or the "True Word," the greater part of which has been preserved in his own words to the present time by Origen, in his reply to it. In this treatise, which is written under the assumed character of a Jew, Celsus not only mentions by name, but also quotes from or refers to, about eighty passages from the books of the New Testament, of which Origen has taken notice. "And whilst he argues from them sometimes in a very perverse and malicious manner, he still takes it for granted, as the foundation of his argument, that, whatever absurdities could be fastened upon any words or actions of Christ, recorded in the Evangelists, it would be a valid objection against Christianity; thereby in effect assuring us, not only that such a book did really exist, but that it was universally received by Christians in those times as credible and divine." It is certain, therefore, that we have the identical books to which Celsus referred.

Thus, "the miraculous conception is mentioned with a view of accusing the Virgin Mary of adultery[2]; — we also recognise Joseph's intention of putting her away[3], and the consequent appearance of the angel, warning him in a dream to take her as his wife[4]; — we meet with a reference to the star that was seen at his birth, and the adoration paid to the new-born Saviour by the Magi at Bethlehem[5]; — the murder of the infants by Herod[6], in consequence of his being deceived by the wise men, is noticed, as also the re-appearance of the angel to Joseph[7], and his consequent flight into Egypt.[8] Here then are references to all the facts of our Saviour's *birth*. Again, we are informed of the descent of the Spirit in the form of a dove[9], and the voice from heaven at the baptism of our Saviour in Jordan[10]; — we hear also of the temptation in the wilderness[11]; — we are told that Christ was constantly attended by a certain number of disciples, though the number is not correct[12]; — there is an allusion to our

[1] In his sixth Homily on 1 Cor. (Op. tom. x. p. 47.) Michaelis, vol. i. p. 39. Lardner, 8vo. vol. viii. p. 7.; 4to. vol. iv. p. 114.
[2] Origen contra Celsum, 4to. Cantabrigiæ, 1677, lib. i. p. 22.
[3] Lib. i. p. 22. [4] Lib. v. p. 266. [5] Lib. i. p. 31.
[6] Lib. i. p. 45. [7] Lib. i. p. 51. [8] Lib. i. pp. 22. 30.
[9] Lib. i. p. 31. [10] Lib. ii. p. 105. [11] Lib. vi. p. 303. [12] Lib. i. p. 47.

Saviour's conversation with the woman of Samaria at the well[1];—and a reference less distinct to the attempt of the people of Nazareth to throw him down the rock, on which their city was built[2]:—here, therefore, is ample testimony to his *baptism*, and the facts immediately following it. Celsus also pretends, as Origen informs us, to believe the *miracles* of Christ; and those of healing the sick, feeding five thousand men, and raising the dead, are expressly mentioned, though they are attributed to magical influence.[3] Several passages also in our Saviour's sermon on the Mount, are quoted *verbatim*[4]; and his *predictions* relating to his sufferings, death, and resurrection are recorded.[5] Nor are the *closing* scenes of our blessed Lord's ministry noticed with less exactness. We meet with the treachery of Judas, and Peter's denial of his Master[6]; we are informed that Christ was bound, insulted[7], beaten with rods, and crucified[8]; — we read of the gall which was given him to eat, and the vinegar to drink[9]; and we are insulted with an unfeeling jest upon the blood and water that flowed from our dying Redeemer's side.[10] This writer mentions also some words which were uttered by Christ upon the cross, and alludes to the earthquake and darkness, that immediately followed the crucifixion.[11] There is also mention made of the appearance of the angels at the sepulchre[12], and of the manifestation of Christ to Mary Magdalen[13], and the disciples[14], after his resurrection. Such are many of the facts, and more might have been recited, relating to the ministry and life of our Saviour, and preserved in the remaining part of the work of the author before us. And who is this author? He was an infidel writer, and one of the greatest enemies with whom Christianity ever had to contend. Now testimony such as the above to the facts recorded in the New Testament, would be strong proof of the truth of the Gospel, even if recorded by a friend to the cause, or, at least, if recorded by an indifferent writer. But when it comes from the pen of a professed enemy to our religion, who, as such, would have denied facts, had there been any room for so doing, the force of it is almost irresistible. For Celsus never once hints that the history itself is false, but endeavours from the facts themselves to disprove the credibility of the Gospel. And the value of this testimony is infinitely increased by taking into the account the time at which the writer lived, which was but little more than a century after the very period at which the events themselves happened. He had, therefore, ample means of satisfying himself of the truth of the facts on which he comments; and it is not easily credible, that he would have neglected those means, since the very circumstance alone of a falsity in the narrative would at once invalidate the testimony of the evangelists, and thus overthrow the

[1] Origen contra Celsum, 4to. Cantabrigiæ, 1677, lib. i. p. 55.
[2] Lib. vi. p. 298. [3] Lib. i. p. 53.
[4] Particularly the comparison of the lilies of the field, lib. vii. p. 343.; the precept, if thy enemy smite thee on one cheek, to turn to him the other, lib. vii. p. 370.; and the impossibility of serving two masters, lib. viii. p. 386. The simile of a camel passing through the eye of a needle is also noticed, lib. vi. p. 286.
[5] Lib. ii. pp. 67. 93. [6] Lib. ii. p. 7. [7] Lib. vi. p. 282. [8] Lib. ii. pp. 79. 81
[9] Lib. iv. p. 174., lib. ii. p. 82. [10] Lib. ii. p. 82. [11] Lib. ii. p. 94.
[12] Lib. ii. p. 266. [13] Lib. ii. p. 94. [14] Lib. ii. p. 104.

religion which that testimony has established."[1] It is also worthy of remark, that in no one instance throughout his memorable attack upon Christianity, did Celsus question the Gospels as books of history; on the contrary, he admitted most of the facts related in them; and he has borne testimony to the persecution suffered by the Christians for their faith. He accuses the Christians of altering the Gospels, which refers to the alterations made by the Marcionites, Valentinians, and other heretics; and it is very material to remark, that this acute adversary of Christianity professed to draw his arguments from the writings received by its professors, especially the four Gospels, and that in *no one instance* did he derive any of his objections from any spurious writings.[2]

2. The testimony of PORPHYRY is still more important than that of Celsus. He was born A.D. 233, of Tyrian origin; but, unhappily for the present age, the mistaken zeal of Constantine and other Christian emperors, in causing his writings against Christianity to be destroyed, has deprived us of the opportunity of knowing the full extent of his objections against the Christian faith. It is, says Michaelis, universally allowed that Porphyry is the most sensible as well as severe adversary of the Christian religion that antiquity can produce. He was versed not only in political but also in philosophical history, as appears from his lives of the philosophers. His acquaintance with the Christians was not confined to a single country, but he had conversed with them in Tyre, in Sicily, and in Rome: his residence in Basan afforded him the best opportunity of a strict intercourse with the Nazarenes, who adopted only the Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew; and his thirst for philosophical inquiry must have induced him to examine the cause of their rejecting the other writings of the New Testament, whether it was that they considered them as spurious, or that, like the Ebionites, they regarded them as a genuine work of the apostles, though not divinely inspired. Enabled by his birth to study the Syriac as well as the Greek authors, he was, of all the adversaries of the Christian religion, the best qualified for inquiring into the authenticity of the sacred writings. He possessed, therefore, every advantage which natural abilities or political situation could afford, to discover whether the New Testament was a genuine work of the apostles and evangelists, or whether it was imposed upon the world after the decease of its pretended authors. But no trace of this suspicion is any where to be found, nor did it ever occur to Porphyry to suppose that it was spurious. The prophecy of Daniel he made no scruple to pronounce a forgery, and written after

[1] Trollope's Hulsean Prize Essay on the expedients to which the Gentile philosophers resorted in opposing the progress of the Gospel, 8vo, pp. 29—32. London, 1822.

[2] As the works of Celsus have long since perished, the nature of his objections can only be known from the verbal quotations from them contained in Origen's reply to him; of which the best edition was published by Dr. Spencer at Cambridge in 1677. From this treatise Dr. Lardner has drawn up his account of the objections of Celsus. (Works, 8vo. vol. viii. pp. 5—69.; 4to. vol. iv. pp. 113—149.) "Who" (it is most justly remarked by the learned and pious Dr. Doddridge) "can forbear admiring the depth of divine wisdom in laying such a firm foundation for our faith in the Gospel history in the writings of one who was so inveterate an enemy to it, and so indefatigable in his attempts to overthrow it?" (Lardner, 8vo. vol. viii. p. 66.; 4to. vol. iv. p. 147.)

the time of Antiochus Epiphanes: his critical penetration enabled him to discover the perfect coincidence between the predictions and the events; and, denying divine inspiration, he found no other means of solving the problem. In support of this hypothesis, he uses an argument which is an equal proof of his learning and sagacity, though his objection does not affect the authority of the prophet; viz. from a Greek paranomasia, or play on words, which he discovered in the history of Daniel and Susanna, he concludes the book to have been written originally in Greek, and afterwards translated into Hebrew.[1] Is it credible, then, that so sagacious an inquirer could have failed in discovering a forgery with respect to the New Testament, had a forgery existed — a discovery which would have given him the completest triumph, by striking at once a mortal blow at the religion which he attempted to destroy? So far, however, is this from being the case, that Porphyry not only did not deny the truth of the Gospel history, but actually considered the miracles of Jesus Christ as real facts.[2] The writings of the ancient Christians, who answered his objections, likewise afford general evidence that Porphyry made numerous observations on the Scriptures.

3. One hundred years after Porphyry, flourished the emperor JULIAN (A. D. 331—363), surnamed the Apostate, from his renunciation of Christianity after he mounted the imperial throne. Though he resorted to the most artful political means for undermining Christianity, yet, as a writer against it, he was every way inferior to Porphyry. From various extracts of his work against the Christians, transcribed by Jerome and Cyril, it is evident that he did not deny the truth of the Gospel history, as a history, though he denied the Deity of Jesus Christ asserted in the writings of the evangelists; he acknowledged the principal facts in the Gospels, as well as the miracles of our Saviour and his apostles. Referring to the difference between the genealogies recorded by Matthew and Luke, he noticed them by name, and recited the sayings of Christ in the very words of the evangelists. He also bore testimony to the Gospel of John being composed later than the other evangelists, and at a time when great numbers were converted to the Christian faith, both in Italy and Greece; and alluded oftener than once to facts recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.[3] By thus quoting the four Gospels and Acts of the

[1] Michaelis, vol. i. p. 44. The objection above noticed, drawn from the story of Susanna, Bishop Marsh very justly remarks, does not affect that prophet's authority, because it relates to a part that is acknowledged to be spurious, or at least never existed in Hebrew; and is for that reason separated from the prophecy of Daniel in the modern editions of the Septuagint, though in the Greek manuscripts and the Romish editions of the Latin Bible, it forms part of the book of Daniel. Ibid. p. 368. Dr. Lardner has given an ample account of Porphyry. (Works, 8vo. vol. viii. pp. 176—248.; 4to. vol. iv. pp. 209—250.)

[2] See this proved in Dr. Macknight's Truth of the Gospel History, pp. 318. 328. 335. 337.

[3] See an ample account of Julian and his writings in Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo. vol. viii. pp. 356—425.; 4to. vol. iv. pp. 311—350, and in Dr. Herwerden, de Juliano Imperatore Religionis Christianæ hoste, eodemque vindice, Lugd. Bat. 1827. 8vo. Dr. Macknight has also given an abstract, less copious than Dr. Lardner's, of Julian's objections, in his "Truth of the Gospel History," pp. 320, 321. 329. 336, 337.

Apostles, and by quoting no other books, Julian shows that these were the *only* historical books received by the Christians as of authority, and as containing authentic memoirs of Jesus Christ and his apostles, together with the doctrines taught by them. But Julian's testimony does something more than represent the judgment of the Christian church in his time; it discovers also his own. He himself expressly states the early date of these records: he calls them by the names which they now bear. He all along supposes, he nowhere attempts to question, their genuineness or authenticity; nor does he give even the slightest intimation that he suspected the whole or any part of them to be forgeries.

It is true that towards the end of the second or in the third century of the Christian æra, certain pieces were published, which were written by heretics, or false teachers, in order to support their errors: but so far is this fact from concluding against the genuineness and authenticity of the books of the New Testament, that it shows the difference between them and these apocryphal writings in the clearest possible manner. For, what reception was given to these forged productions? They succeeded only among sects whose interest it was to defend them as genuine and authentic; or if they sometimes surprised the simplicity of Christian believers, these soon recovered from the imposition. Besides, these pretended sacred books had nothing apostolic in their character. Their origin was obscure, and their publication modern; and the doctrine they professed to support was different from that of the apostles. Indeed, a design to support some doctrine or practice, or to obviate some heresy, *which arose subsequently to the apostolic age*, is apparent throughout. Trifling and impertinent circumstances are also detailed with minuteness; useless and improbable miracles are introduced, the fabulous structure of which caused the fraud to be soon detected. Further, in these forged writings there is a studied imitation of various passages in the genuine Scriptures, both to conceal the style, and to allure readers; at the same time that the former betray a poverty of style and barrenness of invention, glossing over the want of incident by sophistical declamation. *Known* historical facts are *contradicted;* the pretended authors' names are officiously intruded; and actions utterly unworthy of the character of a person divinely commissioned to instruct and reform mankind are ascribed the Jesus.[1]

The preceding argument in favour of the books of the New Testament, drawn from the notice taken of their contents by the early writers against the Christian religion, is very considerable. For, in the first place, it proves that the accounts which the Christians *then* had, were the accounts which we have *now;* and that our present Scriptures were theirs. It proves, moreover, that neither Celsus in the second, Porphyry in the third, nor Julian in the fourth century, suspected the authenticity of these books, or ever insinuated that

[1] The argument above briefly touched upon, is fully illustrated, with great ability and research, by Dr. Maltby, in his Illustrations of the Truth of the Christian Religion, pp. 39—67. See a further account of these apocryphal books, *infra*, in the Appendix to this volume, No. I. Sect. II.

Christians were mistaken in the authors to whom they ascribe them. Not one of them expressed an opinion upon this subject which was different from that held by the Christians. "And when we consider how much it would have availed them to have cast a doubt upon this point, if they could; and how ready they showed themselves to be to take every advantage in their power; and that they were all men of learning and inquiry; — their concession, or rather their suffrage upon the subject, is extremely valuable."[1]

Another important external or historical evidence for the genuineness and antiquity of the New Testament, is offered in the ANCIENT VERSIONS of it, which are still entirely or partially extant in other languages. Some of these, as the Syriac, and several Latin versions, were made so early as the close of the first, or very early in the second century. Now the New Testament must necessarily have existed previously to the making of those versions: and a book, which was so early and so universally read throughout the East in the Syriac, and throughout Europe and Africa in the Latin translation, must be able to lay claim to a high antiquity; while the correspondence of those versions with our copies of the original attests their genuineness and authenticity.

3. We now come to the INTERNAL EVIDENCE, or that which arises out of an examination of the books of the New Testament; and this branch of testimony will be found equally strong and convincing with the preceding. It may be comprised under three particulars, viz. the character of the writers, the language and style of the New Testament, and the circumstantiality of the narrative, together with the coincidence of the accounts therein delivered with the history of those times.

[i.] FIRST, *The Writers of the New Testament are said to have been Jews by birth, and of the Jewish religion, and also to have been immediate witnesses of what they relate.*

This is every where manifest from the mode of narrating their story — from their numerous allusions to the religious ceremonies of the Jews — from the universal prevalence of words, phrases, and thoughts derived from the Old Testament — from the variety of Hebraic words, constructions, and phrases occurring in the Greek of the New Testament, all of which betray an author to whom the Jewish mode of thinking was perfectly natural — from the characters of time, place, persons, and things evident in the New Testament, and particularly in the Gospels and Acts; — all which are related with the confidence of men, who are convinced

[1] Paley's Evidences, vol. i. p. 87. Notwithstanding the mass of positive evidence exhibited in the preceding pages, it has been affirmed by one opposer of the Scriptures, that the epistles contained in the New Testament were not written till the second century; and that the canon of the New Testament was not settled till the council of Nice; though the whole of it was referred to or cited by at least sixteen of the writers above quoted, besides the testimonies of Celsus and Porphyry, all of whom flourished before that council was held; by another, that the first time any allusion was made to the Gospels was in the year 182, that is, nearly one hundred and fifty years after Christ; and by a third, that the Four Gospels and Acts of the Apostles were not in existence before the year 150 of the Christian æra. These bold and mendacious assertions are only equalled by those of some advocates of the modern Church of Rome; one of whom hesitated not to affirm that "the canon of Scripture was fixed at the end of the fourth century" (Milner's End of Controversy, Part I. Letter XI. p. 182. London, 1818); while another has asserted that the canon of the New Testament is received only on the authority of the church of the fourth and fifth centuries! (Newman's Essay on Development, p. 142.)

that their readers already know that they are not relating myths or fabulous narratives, but that they themselves saw and experienced every thing they record, and that their assertions may therefore be considered as proofs. In short, they relate, like men who wrote for readers that were their contemporaries, and lived at the very time in which their history happened, and who knew, or might easily have known, the persons themselves. This is as evident as it is that the noble English historian, who wrote an account of the troubles in the time of Charles I., was himself concerned in those transactions.

[ii.] SECONDLY, *The Language and Style of the New Testament afford an indisputable proof of its authenticity.*

(1.) The LANGUAGE is Greek, which was at that period (in the first century of the Roman monarchy), and had been ever since the time of Alexander the Great, a kind of universal language, just as the French is at present. It was understood and spoken by Greeks, by Romans, and by Jews. The greater part of the Christians also, especially those to whom the Epistles of the New Testament were addressed, would not have comprehended them so universally in any other language. At Corinth, Thessalonica, Colosse, and in Galatia, scarcely was another language understood. Besides the Latin and Aramæan tongues, the Greek also was understood at Rome, and in Palestine by the Jews.

The Greek in which the New Testament is written is not pure and elegant Greek, such as was written by Plato, Aristotle, or other eminent Grecian authors; but it is *Hebraic-Greek*, that is, Greek intermixed with many peculiarities exclusively belonging to the East Aramæan, *i. e.* the Hebrew or Chaldee, and the West Aramæan or Syriac tongues, which were at that time spoken in common life by the *Jews of Palestine*. In short, it "is such a dialect as would be used by persons who were educated in a country where Chaldee or Syriac was spoken as the vernacular tongue, but who also acquired a knowledge of Greek by frequent intercourse with strangers:"[1] and it resembles pure classical Greek as much probably as the French or German written or spoken by a native Englishman, which must be constantly mixed with some anglicisms, resembles the languages spoken at Dresden or at Paris. Now this is a very striking mark of the authenticity of these writings; for, if the New Testament had been written in pure, elegant, and classical Greek, it would be evident that the writers were either native Greeks, or scholars who had *studied* the Greek language, as the writings of Philo and Josephus manifestly indicate the scholar. But since we find the Greek of the New Testament perpetually intermixed with oriental idioms, it is evident from this circumstance that the writers were Jews by birth, and unlearned men, "in *humble* stations, who never sought to obtain an exemption from the dialect they had once acquired. They were concerned with facts and with doctrines; and if these were correctly stated, the purity of their diction appeared to them a matter of no importance. It is true, that one of them was a man of erudition, and moreover born at Tarsus. But if St. Paul was *born* at Tarsus, he was *educated* at Jerusalem; and his erudition was the erudition of a Jewish, not of a Grecian school.

"The language therefore of the Greek Testament is precisely such as we might *expect* from the persons to whom the several parts of it are ascribed. But we may go still further, and assert, not only that the language of the Greek Testament *accords* with the situation of the persons to whom it is ascribed, but that it *could not* have been used by any person or persons who were in a different situation from that of the apostles and evangelists. It was necessary to have lived in the first century, and to have been educated in Judæa, or in Galilee, or in some adjacent country, to be *enabled* to write such a compound language as that of the Greek Testament. Unless some oriental dialect had been *familiar* to the persons who wrote the several books of the New Testament, they would not have been *able* to write that particular kind of Greek, by which those books are distinguished from

[1] Bp. Marsh's Lectures, part v. p. 87.

every classic author. Nor would this kind of language have appeared in the several books of the New Testament, even though the writers had lived in Judæa, unless they had lived also in the same *age* with the apostles and evangelists. Judæa itself could not have produced in the *second* century the compositions which we find in the New Testament. The destruction of Jerusalem and the total subversion of the Jewish state, introduced new forms and new relations, as well in language as in policy. The language therefore of a fabrication attempted in the second century would have borne a different character from that of writings composed in the same country *before* the destruction of Jerusalem. And even if the dialect of a former age could have been successfully *imitated*, no inhabitant of Judæa in the second century would have made the attempt. The *Jews* who remained in that country will hardly be suspected of such a fabrication. And the only *Christians* who remained there in the second century were the Nazarenes and the Ebionites. But the Nazarenes and the Ebionites used only *one* Gospel, and that Gospel was in Hebrew. They will hardly be suspected therefore of having forged Greek Gospels. Nor can they be suspected of having forged Greek Epistles, especially as the Epistles of St. Paul were *rejected* by the Ebionites, not indeed as spurious, but as containing doctrines at variance with their peculiar tenets. But if *Judæa* could not have produced in the second century such writings as we find in the New Testament, no *other* country could have produced them. For the Christians of the second century, who lived where Greek was the vernacular language, though their dialect might differ from the dialect of Athens, never used a dialect in which oriental phraseology was so mingled with Greek words as we find in the New Testament. The language therefore clearly shows that it could not have been written in any other age than in the first century, nor by any other persons than by persons in the situation of the Apostles and Evangelists." [1]

Nor is the argument for the authenticity of the New Testament, drawn from the nature of the language in which it is written, at all affected by the circumstance of the Gospel of Saint Matthew and the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Hebrews having been originally written in Hebrew; — that is, according to the opinions of some learned men. "For," as it is most forcibly urged by the learned prelate to whose researches this section is deeply indebted, "if the arguments which have been used in regard to language do not apply to them *immediately*, those arguments apply to them *indirectly*, and with no inconsiderable force. If those arguments show that the Greek Gospel of Saint Matthew was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, and that Gospel is a translation, it follows *à fortiori*, that the *original* was written before that period. And if those arguments further show, that the Greek Gospel of Saint Matthew was written by a person similarly situated with Saint Matthew, we must conclude, either that the translation was made by Saint Matthew himself (and there are instances of the same author writing the same work in two different languages), or that the translator was so *connected* with the author, as to give to the translation the value of an original. The Hebrew Gospel of Saint Matthew was retained by the Hebrew Christians of Palestine, and still existed, though with various interpolations, in the fourth century. But the Greek Gospel was necessarily adopted by the Greek Christians: it was so adopted from the earliest ages; and it is no less the Gospel of Saint Matthew, than the Gospel which Saint Matthew wrote in Hebrew. Similar remarks apply to the Epistle which was written by Saint Paul to the Hebrews." [2]

(2.) Let us now advert to the STYLE of the New Testament, considered as an evidence of its authenticity.

This style or manner of writing manifestly shows that its authors were born and educated in the Jewish religion; for the use of words and phrases is such, — the allusions to the temple-worship, as well as to the peculiar usages and sentiments of the Jews, are so perpetual, — and the prevalence of the Old Testament phraseology (which is interwoven into the body of the New Testament, rather than quoted by its writers) is so great, as to prove, beyond the possibility of contradiction, that

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[1] Bp. Marsh's Lectures, part v. pp. 88—90. For an account of the peculiar structure of the Greek language of the New Testament, see Vol. IV. pp. 8—23. *infra*.

[2] Bp. Marsh's Lectures, part v. p. 91.

the books of the New Testament could be written by none but persons originally Jews, and who were not superior in rank and education to those whose names they bear. Thus, the style of the historical books, particularly of the Gospels, is totally devoid of ornament; it presents no beautiful transitions from one subject to another; the ear is not charmed with the melody of harmonious periods; the imagination is not fired with grand epithets or pompous expressions. The bad taste of some readers is not gratified by laboured antitheses, high-sounding language, or false ornament of any kind; neither is the good taste of others pleased with terse diction, brilliant expressions, or just metaphors. In short, the elegancies of composition and style are not to be sought in the historical books of the New Testament, in which "we find the simplicity of writers, who were more intent upon things than upon words: we find men of plain education honestly relating what they knew, without attempting to adorn their narratives by any elegance or grace of diction. And this is precisely the kind of writing which we should expect from the persons to whom those books are ascribed. In the Epistles of St. Paul we find a totally different manner: but again it is precisely such as we should *expect* from St. Paul. His arguments, though irresistible, are frequently devoid of method; in the *strength* of the reasoning the regularity of the *form* is overlooked. The erudition there displayed is the erudition of a learned Jew; the argumentation there displayed is the argumentation of a Jewish convert to Christianity confuting his brethren on their own ground. Who is there that does not recognise in this description the apostle who was born at Tarsus, but educated at the feet of Gamaliel?

"If we further compare the language of the New Testament with the temper and disposition of the writers to whom the several books of it are ascribed, we shall again find a correspondence which implies that those books are *justly* ascribed to them. The character of the disciple whom Jesus loved is every where impressed on the writings of St. John. Widely different is the character impressed on the writings of St. Paul; but it is equally accordant with the character of the writer. Gentleness and kindness were characteristic of St. John; and these qualities characterise his writings. Zeal and animation marked every where the *conduct* of St. Paul; and these are the qualities which are every where discernible in the *writings* ascribed to him." [1]

[iii.] THIRDLY, *The Circumstantiality of the narrative, as well as the coincidence of the accounts delivered in the New Testament with the history of those times, are also an indisputable internal evidence of its authenticity.*

"Whoever," says Michaelis, "undertakes to forge a set of writings, and ascribe them to persons who lived in a former period, exposes himself to the utmost danger of a discordancy with the history and manners of the age to which his accounts are referred; and this danger increases in proportion as they relate to points not mentioned in general history, but to such as belong only to a single city, sect, religion, or school. Of all books that ever were written, there is none, if the New Testament is a forgery, so liable to detection: the scene of action is not confined to a single country, but displayed in the greatest cities of the Roman empire; allusions are made to the various manners and principles of the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews, which are carried so far with respect to this last nation as to extend even to the trifles and follies of their schools. A Greek or Roman Christian, who lived in the second or third century, though as well versed in the writings of the ancients as Eustathius or Asconius, would still have been wanting in Jewish literature; and a Jewish convert in those ages, even the most learned rabbi, would have been equally deficient in the knowledge of Greece and Rome. If, then, the New Testament, thus exposed to detection (had it been an imposture), is found, after the severest researches, to harmonise with the history, the manners, and the opinions of the first century, and since, the more minutely we inquire, the more perfect we find the coincidence, we must conclude that it was beyond the reach of

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[1] Bp. Marsh's Lectures, part v. pp. 92, 93. The reader will find some very instructive observations on the style of the evangelists in the Rev. Dr. Nares's work, intitled "The Veracity of the Evangelists demonstrated, by a comparative View of their Histories,' chap. iii. pp. 28—38. 2d edit.

human abilities to effectuate so wonderful a deception."[1] A few facts will illustrate this remark.

The Gospels state that Jesus Christ was a real person, who was born during the reign of the Roman emperor Augustus; that he began his ministry in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius; that, about three years and a half afterwards, Pilate, the Roman governor, condemned him to death; and that he was accordingly put to death; and the book, called the Acts of the Apostles, relates that Paul defended himself before the Roman governors Felix and Festus, and before the Jewish king Agrippa, &c. An impostor would not write so *circumstantially*.

Further, there are certain historical circumstances, respecting the political constitutions of the world mentioned in the New Testament, which *coincide with the accounts of contemporary profane historians*, and incontestably point out the time when they were written.

(1.) Thus Palestine is stated to be divided into three principal provinces, Judæa, Samaria, and Galilee.

At that time this country was subject to the Romans, but had formerly been governed by its own kings; the Jews were deprived of the absolute power of life and death; a Roman governor resided at Jerusalem. The nation was discontented with the Roman sovereignty, refused to pay tribute, and was disposed to revolt. Two religious sects are represented as having the chief sway among the Jews, viz. the Pharisees and Sadducees; the former, who taught a mechanical religion, deceived and tyrannised over the people, by whom, however, they were almost idolised; while the latter, who adopted an epicurean philosophy, were strongly supported by the principal characters of the nation. The temple of Jerusalem was then standing, and was annually visited by a great number of Jews, who were scattered abroad in different parts of the world. These and similar circumstances are rather presupposed as universally known than related by the authors of these writings; and they agree most exactly with the condition of the Jews, and of the Roman empire, in the first century of the Roman monarchy, as described by contemporary profane writers.

(2.) We read in the Gospels that there were publicans, or tax-gatherers, established at Capernaum, and at Jericho.

Now it was in this last-mentioned city that the precious balm was collected; which, constituting the principal article of exportation from that country, required their service to collect the duty imposed on it. And at Capernaum commenced the transit, which both Justin and Strabo tell us was extensively carried on by the Aradæans.[2]

(3.) In Luke iii. 14. we read that certain soldiers came to John the Baptist, while he was preaching in all the country about Jordan, and *demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do?* an important question in Christian morality.

It has been asked who these soldiers were? for it does not appear that the Roman soldiers, who were then stationed in Judæa, were engaged in any war. Now it happens that the expression used by the evangelical historian is not *στρατιῶται* or *soldiers*, but *στρατευόμενοι*, that is, *men who were actually under arms* or *marching to battle*. It is not to be supposed that he would use this word without a sufficient reason, and what that reason is, we may readily discover on consulting Josephus's account of the reign of Herod the tetrarch of Galilee. He tells us[3] that Herod was *at that very time* engaged in a war with his father-in-law, Aretas, a petty king of Arabia Petræa, whose daughter he had married, but who had returned to her father in consequence of Herod's ill-treatment. The army of Herod, *then* on its march from Galilee, passed of necessity through the country where John was baptizing; and the military men, who questioned him, were a part of that army. So minute, so perfect, and so latent a coincidence was never discovered in a forgery of later ages.[4]

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[1] Michaelis's Introduction, vol. i. p. 49.

[2] Justini Epitome Trogi, lib. xxxv. c. 3. Strabonis Geographia, lib. xvi. p. 519. (ed. Casauboni.)

[3] Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. xviii. c. 5. s. 1, 2.

[4] For the above illustrative coincidence we are indebted to Michaelis (vol. i. p. 51.); and for the next following to Bp. Marsh, Lectures, part v. pp. 78—82.

(4.) The same evangelist (Luke iii. 19, 20.) relates that *Herod the tetrarch being reproved by him* (John the Baptist) *for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.*

It does not appear what connection there was between the soldiers above mentioned and the place of John's imprisonment, though the context leads us to infer that it was somewhere in the vicinity of the place where the Baptist was preaching. The evangelist Mark (vi. 17—28.), who relates the circumstances of his apprehension and death, informs us that, at a royal entertainment given on occasion of Herod's birthday, *the daughter of the said Herodias came in;* and that the king, being highly delighted with her dancing, promised to give her whatsoever she wished. After consulting with her mother Herodias, she demanded the head of John the Baptist; and Herod, reluctantly assenting, immediately dispatched an *executioner*, who went and beheaded John in prison. Now it does not appear, from the narrative of Mark, why a person in actual military service (σπεκουλάτωρ) was employed; or why Herodias should have cherished such an hatred of John, as to instruct her daughter to demand the head of the holy man. But the above-cited passage from Josephus explains both circumstances. Herod, we have seen, was actually at war with Aretas: while his army was on its march against his father-in-law, Herod gave an entertainment in the fortress of Machærus, which was at no great distance from the place where John was preaching. Herodias was the cause of that war. It was on her account that the daughter of Aretas, the wife of Herod, was compelled by ill-treatment to take refuge with her father; and as the war in which Aretas was engaged was undertaken in order to obtain redress for his daughter, Herodias had a peculiar interest in accompanying Herod, even when he was marching to battle; and her hatred of John (who had reproved Herod on her account), at that particular time is thus clearly accounted for. No spurious productions could bear so rigid a test as that which is here applied to the Gospels of Mark and Luke.

(5.) Let us now take an example from the Acts of the Apostles (xxiii. 2—5.), where we have the following account of Paul's appearance before the council at Jerusalem, and his answer to Ananias: — *And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said,* "*Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.*" *And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. Then said Paul,* "*God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?*" *And they that stood by said,* "*Revilest thou* God's high priest?" *Then said Paul,* "*I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest.*"—Now, on this passage, it has been asked, 1. Who was this Ananias? 2. How can it be reconciled with chronology that Ananias was at that time called the high priest, when it is certain from Josephus that the time of his holding that office was much earlier? And, 3. How it happened that Paul said, *I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest,* since the external marks of office must have determined whether he were or not.

"On all these subjects," says Michaelis, "is thrown the fullest light, as soon as we examine the special history of that period, a light which is not confined to the present, but extends itself to the following chapters, insomuch that it cannot be doubted that this book was written, not after the destruction of Jerusalem, but by a person who was contemporary to the events which are there related. Ananias, the son of Nebedeni, was high priest at the time that Helena, queen of Adiabene, supplied the Jews with corn from Egypt[1], during the famine which took place in the fourth year of Claudius, mentioned in the eleventh chapter of the Acts. St. Paul, therefore, who took a journey to Jerusalem at that period[2], could not have been ignorant of the elevation of Ananias to that dignity. Soon after the holding of the first council, as it is called, at Jerusalem, Ananias was dispossessed of his office, in consequence of certain acts of violence between the Samaritans and the Jews, and sent prisoner to Rome[3], whence he was afterwards released, and returned to Jerusalem. Now from that period he could not be called high priest in the proper sense of the word, though Josephus[4] has sometimes given him the title of

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[1] Joseph. Ant. Jud. lib. xx. c. 5. § 2.
[2] Acts xv.
[3] Joseph. Ant. Jud. lib. xx. c. 6. § 2.
[4] Joseph. lib. xx c. 9. § 2. and Bell Jud. lib. ii. c. 17. § 9.

ἀρχιερεὺς taken in the more extensive meaning of a priest, who had a seat and voice in the Sanhedrin[1]; and Jonathan, though we are not acquainted with the circumstances of his elevation, had been raised in the mean time to the supreme dignity in the Jewish church. Between the death of Jonathan, who was murdered[2] by order of Felix, and the high priesthood of Ismael, who was invested with that office by Agrippa[3], elapsed an interval in which this dignity continued vacant. Now it happened precisely in this interval that Saint Paul was apprehended in Jerusalem; and the Sanhedrin being destitute of a president, he undertook of his own authority the discharge of that office, which he executed with the greatest tyranny.[4] It is possible, therefore, that St. Paul, who had been only a few days in Jerusalem, might be ignorant that Ananias, who had been dispossessed of the priesthood, had taken upon himself a trust to which he was not entitled; he might therefore very naturally exclaim, '*I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest!*' Admitting him, on the other hand, to have been acquainted with the fact, the expression must be considered as an indirect reproof, and a tacit refusal to recognise usurped authority. A passage, then, which has hitherto been involved in obscurity, is brought by this relation into the clearest light; and the whole history of St. Paul's imprisonment, the conspiracy of the fifty Jews[5] with the consent of the Sanhedrin, their petition to Festus to send him from Cæsarea, with intent to murder him on the road[6], are facts which correspond to the character of the times as described by Josephus, who mentions the principal persons recorded in the Acts, and paints their profligacy in colours even stronger than those of St. Luke."[7]

(6.) In Acts xxvii. 1. Luke relates that "when St. Paul was sent from Cæsarea to Rome, he was with the other prisoners committed to the care of Julius, an officer of the Augustan Cohort, that is, a Roman Cohort, which had the honour of bearing the name of the Emperor.

"Now it appears from the account which Josephus has given in his second book on the Jewish war[8], that when Felix was procurator of Judæa, the Roman garrison at Cæsarea was *chiefly* composed of soldiers who were natives of *Syria*. But it also appears, as well from the same book[9] as from the twentieth book of his Antiquities[10] that a small body of *Roman* soldiers was stationed there at the same time, and that this body of *Roman* soldiers was dignified with the title of ΣΕΒΑΣΤΗ or Augustan, the same Greek word being employed by Josephus, as by the author of the Acts of the Apostles. This select body of Roman soldiers had been employed by Cumanus, who immediately preceded Felix in the Procuratorship of Judæa, for the purpose of quelling an insurrection.[11] And when Festus, who succeeded Felix, had occasion to send prisoners from Cæsarea to Rome, he would of course intrust them to the care of an officer belonging to the select corps. Even *here* then we have a coincidence, which is worthy of notice,—a coincidence which we should never have discovered without consulting the writings of Josephus. But that which is *most* worthy of notice, is the circumstance, that this select body of soldiers bore the title of Augustan. This title was known of course to St. Luke, who accompanied St. Paul from Cæsarea to Rome. But, that, in the time of the Emperor Nero, the garrison of Cæsarea, which consisted chiefly of Syrian soldiers, contained also a small body of Roman soldiers, and that they were dignified by the epithet Augustan, are circumstances so minute, that no impostor of a later age would have known them. And they prove incontestably, that the Acts of the Apostles could have been written only by a person in the situation of St. Luke."[12]

(7.) Once more, between the epistles of Paul and the history related in the Acts of the Apostles, there exist many notes of *undesigned coincidence* or correspon-

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1 Αρχιερεις in the plural number is frequently used in the New Testament when allusion is made to the Sanhedrin.

2 Jos. Ant. Jud. lib. xx. c. 8. § 5.

3 Ibid. lib. xx. c. 8. § 3.

4 Ibid. lib. xx. c. 9. § 2.

5 Acts xxiii. 12—15.

6 Acts xxv. 3.

7 Michaelis, vol. i. pp. 51—54.

8 Bell. Jud. lib. ii. c. 13. § 7.

9 Cap. 12. § 5. p. 174.

10 Antiq. Jud. lib. xx. c. 6.

11 Antiq. Jud. lib. xx.. c. 6.

12 Bp. Marsh's Lectures, part v. pp. 82—84. See also additional instances in the Rev. J. J. Blunt's "Veracity of the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles argued from the undesigned Coincidences to be found in them, when compared, 1. with each other, and, 2. with Josephus." (Lond. 1828. 8vo.) And also in the Rev. T. R. Birks's "Horæ Apostolicæ," annexed to his edition of Dr. Paley's "Horæ Paulinæ." (London, 1850. 8vo.)

dency, the perusal of which is sufficient to prove, that neither the history was taken from the letters, nor the letters from the history. "And the *undesignedness* of these agreements (which undesignedness is gathered from their latency, their minuteness, their obliquity, the suitableness of the circumstances in which they consist, to the places in which those circumstances occur, and the circuitous references by which they are traced out,) demonstrates that they have not been produced by meditation, or by any fraudulent contrivance. But coincidences from which these causes are excluded, and which are too close and numerous to be accounted for by accidental concurrences of fiction, must necessarily have truth for their foundation."[1]

These coincidences are illustrated at considerable length, and in a most masterly manner by Dr. Paley, in his "Horæ Paulinæ," from which admirable treatise the following particulars are abridged. As the basis of his argument he assumes nothing but the existence of the books. He observes, that in the epistles of Paul, there is an air of truth and reality that immediately strikes the reader. His letters are connected with his history in the Acts by their particularity, and by the numerous circumstances found in them. By examining and comparing these circumstances, we observe that the history and the epistles are neither of them taken from the other, but are independent documents unknown to, or at least unconsulted by, each other; but we find the substance, and often very minute articles of the history, recognised in the epistles, by allusions and references which can neither be imputed to *design*, nor, without a foundation in truth, be accounted for by accident, by hints and expressions, and single words dropping, as it were fortuitously, from the pen of the writer, or drawn forth, each by some occasion proper to the place in which it occurs, but widely removed from any view to consistency or agreement. These, we know, are effects which reality produces, but which, without reality at the bottom, can hardly be conceived to exist. When such undesigned coincidences are too close and too numerous to be accounted for by accidental concurrences of fiction, they must necessarily have truth for their foundation. This argument depends upon a large deduction of particulars, which cannot be abstracted but which carry great weight of evidence.

If it can be thus proved, that we are in possession of the very letters which the apostle Paul wrote, they substantiate the Christian history. The great object of modern research is to come at the epistolary correspondence of the times. Amidst the obscurities, the silence, or the contradictions of history, if a letter can be found, we regard it as the discovery of a land-mark; as that by which we can correct, adjust, or supply the imperfections and uncertainties of other accounts. The facts which they disclose generally come out incidentally, and therefore without design to mislead by false or exaggerated accounts. This is applicable to Paul's Epistles with as much justice as to any letters whatever. Nothing could be further from the intention of the writer, than to record any part of his history, though in fact it is made public dy them, and the reality of it is made probable.

These letters also show, 1. That Christianity had prevailed before the confusions which preceded and attended the destruction of Jerusalem. 2. That the Gospels were not made up of reports and stories current at the time; for a man cannot be led by reports to refer to transactions in which he states himself to be present and active. 3. That the converts to Christianity were not the barbarous, mean, ignorant set of men, incapable of thought or reflection, which the false representations of infidelity would make them; and that these letters are not adapted to the habits and comprehension of a barbarous people. 4. That the history of Paul is so implicated with that of the other apostles, and with the substance of the Christian history itself, that if Paul's story (not the miraculous part) be admitted to be true, we cannot reject the rest as fabulous. For example; if we believe Paul to have been a preacher of Christianity, we must also believe that there were such men as Peter, and James, and other apostles, who had been companions of Christ during his life, and who published the same things concerning him which Paul taught. 5. That Paul had a sound and sober judgment. 6. That Paul underwent great sufferings, and that the church was in a distressed state, and the preaching of Christianity attended with dangers; this appears even from incidental passages, as well as direct ones. 7. Paul, in these Epistles, asserts, in positive, unequivocal terms, his perform-

[1] Paley's Evidences, vol. ii. p. 186.

ance of miracles, properly so called, in the face of those amongst whom he declares they were wrought, and even to adversaries, who would have exposed the falsity, if there had been any.—(Gal. iii. 5; Rom. xv. 18, 19.; 2 Cor. xii. 12.)

This testimony shows that the series of actions represented by Paul was real, and proves not only that the original witnesses of the Christian history devoted themselves to lives of toil and suffering, in consequence of the truth of that history, but also that the author of the Acts was well acquainted with Paul's history, and a companion of his travels; which establishes the credibility of Luke's Gospel, considering them as two parts of the same history; for though there are instances of *second* parts being forgeries, we know of none where the second part is genuine and the first spurious. Now, is there an example to be met with of any man voluntarily undergoing such incessant hardships as Paul did, and the constant expectation of a violent death, for the sake of attesting a story of what was false; and of what, if false, he must have known to be so? And it should not be omitted, that the prejudices of Paul's education were against his becoming a disciple of Christ, as his first violent opposition to it evidently showed.[1]

Further: there are four Epistles of Paul to single persons, who were his friends; two to Timothy, one to Titus, and one to Philemon. In private letters to intimate companions some expression would surely let fall a hint at least of fraud, if there were any. Yet the same uniform design of promoting sincerity, benevolence, and piety, is perceived; and the same histories of Christ and Paul are alluded to as true accounts, in his private as in his public epistles.

Besides numerous undesigned coincidences in historical circumstances and facts, which Dr. Paley has specified, there is also an undesigned agreement throughout, between the sentiments and manner of writing of Paul in his Epistles, and the account of his character and conduct given in the book of Acts. Every instance of this kind bespeaks reality, and therefore deserves notice as a branch of internal evidence. The Epistles of Paul show the author to be a man of parts and learning, of sound judgment, quick conception, crowded thought, fluent expression, and zealous and indefatigable in his endeavours to accomplish the point at which he aimed. These properties correspond with the history of him contained in the Acts. Brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, he was instructed in Jewish learning. His speech to the philosophers and people of Athens, his behaviour and addresses to Agrippa, Festus, and Felix, &c., prove his sagacity, his judicious selection of topics, and his skill in reasoning. The violent manner in which he is recorded in the Acts to have persecuted the first Christians agrees with the ardour of spirit that breathes in all his letters, and the glowing warmth of his style.

There are, indeed, some seeming discordances, which, however, are easily reconcileable by attending to his ardent temper, and to the ruling principle of his conduct in different periods of his life. His rage against the Christians (owing to strong Jewish prejudices) was furious and unrestrained[2], and unjustifiable against any peaceable persons, such as they were. On the other hand, his Epistles manifest a warmth and eagerness governed by a calmer principle After his conversion, Paul was at the same time prudent, steady, and ardent. He was as indefatigable as he had been before; but, instead of cruel and unjust means to obtain his purposes, he employed argument, persuasion, and the merciful and mighty power of God. The religion he embraced accounts for these changes easily and naturally. His conversion to Christianity, the circumstances of which are related in the book of Acts, and which are mentioned or alluded to in his Epistles, harmonise every seeming contradiction in his character, and thus become a strong evidence of the truth both of his history and of his Epistles.

A similar observation may be made concerning Peter. Is there not a striking uniformity in the character of this Apostle, as it is delineated by the sacred writers, and as it is discoverable in the style, manner, and sentiments of his Epistles? Do they not bear the marks of the same energy, the same unpolished and nervous simplicity, the same impetuosity and vehemence of thought, the same strength and vigour of untutored genius; strong in the endowments of nature, but without the refinements of art or science? Now there would scarcely have been found such a

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[1] Paley's Horæ Paulinæ, in the conclusion. Paley's Evidences of Christianity, vol. ii. chap. 7.

[2] Acts viii. 3., ix. 1.

nice agreement between the character of Peter given in the writings of others, and exemplified in his own if the one had been a fiction, or the other spurious. It is the same Peter that speaks in the Gospel history, in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles which bear his name. The seal of his character, as graven by the Evangelists, exactly corresponds with the impression of his letters. This is an argument of the genuineness of his Epistles, and of the truth of the Christian religion.[1]

The other books of the New Testament furnish ample materials for pursuing this species of evidence from undesigned coincidences of different kinds. Dr. Paley [2], and Mr. Wakefield [3], have both produced some instances of it between the Gospels, to which we shall only add, in the last place, that the similitude or coincidence between the style of John's Gospel, and the first Epistle that bears his name, is so striking, that no reader, who is capable of discerning what is peculiar in an author's turn of thinking, can entertain the slightest doubt of their being the productions of one and the same writer.[4] Writings so circumstanced prove themselves and one another to be genuine.

[1] T. G. Taylor's Essay on the Conduct and Character of Peter.

[2] Evid. of Christ. part ii. chap. 4.

[3] Internal Evidences, pp. 207—210.

[4] The following comparative table of passages, from the Gospel and first Epistle of Saint John, will (we think) prove the point above stated beyond the possibility of contradiction.

Epistle.	*Gospel.*
Ch. I. 1. That which was from the beginning—ὃ ἐθεασάμεθα, which we have contemplated—concerning the living word.	Ch. I. 1. In the beginning was the word. 14., And, ἐθεασάμεθα, we beheld his glory. 4. In him was life. 14. The word was made flesh.
II. 5. Whosoever keepeth his word, truly in that man the love of God is perfected.	XIV. 23. If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him.
II. 6. He who saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. See ch. iii. 24., iv. 13. 16.	XV. 4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bring forth fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.
II. 8. I write to you a new commandment.	XIII. 34. A new commandment I give to you,
III. 11. This is the message which ye have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.	that ye love one another as I have loved you.
II. 8. The darkness passeth away, and the light which is true, now shineth.	I. 5. The light shineth in darkness. 9. That was the true light.
10. Abideth in the light, and there is no stumbling block to him.	XI. 10. If a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light to him.
II. 13. Young children, I write to you, because ye have known the Father. 14. Because ye have known him from the beginning.	XVII. 3. This is the eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, And Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.
II. 29. Every one who worketh righteousness, is begotten of God. See also iii. 9., v. 1.	III. 3. Except a man be begotten again. 5. Except a man be begotten of water and of the Spirit.
III. 1. Behold how great love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God!	I. 12. To them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.
III. 2. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.	XVII. 24. Be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.
III. 8. He who worketh sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.	VIII. 44. Ye are of your father the devil —He was a murderer from the beginning.
III. 13. Do not wonder, my brethren, that the world hateth you.	XV. 20. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.
IV. 9. By this the love of God was manifested, that God sent his Son, the only be-	III. 16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever

The forgeries of these things, if forgeries they were, must (as Dr. Jortin has forcibly remarked) have equalled Father Hardouin's atheistical monks of the thirteenth century; who, according to his fantastical account, in an age of ignorance and barbarism, surpassed in abilities all the ancients and moderns; forged the Greek and Latin authors whom we call classical; and were not only great poets, but also great mathematicians, chronologers, geographers, astronomers, and critics, and capable of inserting in their proper places names and accounts of men, rivers, cities, and regions, eclipses of the sun and moon, Athenian archons, Attic months, Olympiads, and Roman consuls: all which happy inventions have been since confirmed by astronomical calculations and tables, voyages, inscriptions, Fasti Capitolini, fragments, manuscripts, and a diligent collation of authors with each other.[1]

Such are the evidences, both external and internal, direct and collateral, for the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament; and when their number, variety, and the extraordinary nature of many of them are impartially considered, it is impossible not to come to this convincing conclusion, viz. that the books now extant in the New Testament are genuine and authentic, and are the same writings which were originally composed by the authors whose names they bear.

Epistle.	*Gospel.*
gotten, into the world, that we might live through him.	believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life.
IV. 12. No man hath seen God at any time.	I. 18. No man hath seen God at any time.
V. 13. These things I have written to you who believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life; and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.	XX. 31. These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.
V. 14. If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.	XIV. 14. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.
V. 20. The Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.	XVII. 2. Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3. And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. (Macknight on the Epistles, Pref. to 1 John, sect. ii.)

[1] Remarks on Eccles. Hist. vol. i. pp. 28. *et seq.* Less's Authenticity of the New Testament, translated by Mr. Kingdon, pp. 1—26. Michaelis, vol. i. pp. 4—54. Simpson's Internal Evidences, pp. 160—165. Hales's Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. book ii. pp. 687—692. Stosch, de Canone, p. 89. Pictet, Théologie Chrétienne, tome i. p. 83. Ernesti Interp. Nov. Test. pars iii. pp. 147. *et seq.* See also a very copious discussion of the Evidences for the Authenticity of the New Testament in Dr. Cook's Inquiry into the Books of the New Testament. Edinburgh, 1821. 8vo.

SECT. III.

ON THE UNCORRUPTED PRESERVATION OF THE BOOKS OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

ALTHOUGH the genuineness and authenticity of the Old and New Testaments have been thus clearly proved, yet it may perhaps be asked, whether those books have not long since been destroyed? And whether they have been transmitted to us *entire* and *uncorrupted?* To these inquiries we reply, that we have evidence, equally decisive and satisfactory with that which has demonstrated the genuineness and authenticity of the Old and New Testaments, to prove that they have descended to us entire and uncorrupted in any thing material; — such evidence indeed as can be adduced for no other production of antiquity.

I. And, first, *with regard to the Old Testament,* although the Jews have been charged with corrupting it, yet this charge has never been substantiated, and, in fact, the thing itself is morally impossible. Generally speaking, the arguments which have demonstrated that the Pentateuch (or five books of Moses) is not, and could not be a forgery in the first instance, apply equally to prove that these books have not been wilfully and designedly corrupted. But, to be more particular, we may remark,

1. *That there is no proof or vestige whatever of such pretended alteration.*

The Jews have in every age regarded the Pentateuch as the genuine and uncorrupted work of one single person, and have equally respected every part of it. Indeed, if they had mutilated or corrupted these writings, they would doubtless have expunged from them every relation of facts and events, that militated against the honour and credit of their nation. Besides, when could such an alteration or corruption have been executed? It was not possible, shortly after the death of Moses, for the memory of the transactions recorded in the Pentateuch was too recent for any one to venture upon any corruption or alteration, which public notoriety would have contradicted. The Pentateuch, therefore, could not have been altered or corrupted so long as Joshua and that generation lived, who were zealous for the worship of the true God. (Josh. xxiv. 31.) From that time to the age of Samuel, the Israelites were under the direction of civil governors or judges, who braved every danger in defence of the form of government established in the sacred books.

Further, if they had wilfully corrupted the books of the Old Testament BEFORE *the time of Christ and his apostles,* the prophets who flourished from Samuel to Malachi, and who were neither slow nor timid in reproving the sins both of rulers and subjects, would not have passed over so heinous an offence in silence. After the separation of the ten tribes, at least, the books of Moses were kept in the kingdom of Israel; and the rivalry that continued to subsist between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah was an insuperable bar to any corruption or alteration; for it could not have been attempted in either kingdom without opposition and detection from the other, of which some notice must have been taken in their historical books. Besides, if the Old Testament had been corrupted in the time of Jesus Christ and his apostles, the Jews could not have passed without censure from them who rebuked their hypocrisy, incredulity, and wickedness with so much severity. If there had been any alteration or corruption, it must have been the work either of *one* or of *many* persons. It cannot be conceived that any one person could do it, without being exposed; nor that any one could have vanity enough to expect success in an attempt to alter facts in a book so universally read and so

much esteemed. The unity of design, the correspondence of sentiment, and the uniform reference to the same facts, which are observable throughout the Old Testament, forbid us to imagine that *many* were united in corrupting or altering any part of it. In a word, no man or number of men could make an attempt of this kind without being exposed. Nor is it rational to suppose, that any man or number of men could have capacity competent to effect such a design, who would not also have had the sense to observe the necessity of making it more agreeable to the natural tempers of mankind, in order that it might obtain credit in the world.

Again, if the Old Testament had been mutilated or corrupted AFTER *the birth of Christ*, out of malice to the Christians, and in order to deprive them of arguments and evidences for proving their religion, the Jews would unquestionably have expunged or falsified those memorable prophecies concerning Christ which were so irrefragably cited both by him and by his apostles. But no such obliteration or alteration has ever been made; on the contrary, those very passages have continued in their original purity, and are sometimes more express in the original Hebrew text than in the common translation.

2. *In fact, neither before nor after the time of Christ,* could *the Jews corrupt or falsify the Hebrew Scriptures; for,*

[i.] BEFORE *that event,* the regard which was paid to them by the Jews, especially to the law, would render any forgery or material change in their contents impossible.

The law having been the deed by which the land of Canaan was divided among the Israelites, it is improbable that this people, who possessed that land, would suffer it to be altered or falsified. The distinction of the twelve tribes, and their separate interests, made it more difficult to alter their law than that of other nations less jealous than the Jews. Further, at certain stated seasons, the law was publicly read before all the people of Israel[1]; and it was appointed to be kept in the ark, for a constant memorial against those who transgressed it.[2] Their king was required to *write him a copy of this law in a book, out of* that which is *before the priests the Levites, and to read therein all the days of his life*[3]; their priests also were commanded to *teach the children of Israel all the statutes, which the Lord had spoken to them by the hand of Moses*[4]; and parents were charged not only to make it familiar to themselves, but also to teach it diligently to their children[5]; besides which, a severe prohibition was annexed, against either making any addition to or diminution from the law.[6] Now such precepts as these could not have been given by an impostor who was adding to it, and who would wish men to forget rather than enjoin them to remember it; for, as all the people were obliged to know and observe the law under severe penalties, they were in a manner the trustees and guardians of the law, as well as the priests and Levites. The people, who were to teach their children, must have had copies of it; the priests and Levites must have had copies of it; and the magistrates must have had copies of it, as being the law of the land. Further, after the people were divided into two kingdoms, both the people of Israel and those of Judah still retained the same book of the law; and the rivalry or enmity that subsisted between the two kingdoms, prevented either of them from altering or adding to the law. After the Israelites were carried captives into Assyria, other nations were placed in the cities of Samaria in their stead; and the Samaritans received the Pentateuch, either from the priest who was sent by order of the king of Assyria, to instruct them in the *manner of the God of the land*[7], or several years afterwards from the hands of Manasseh, the son of Joiada the high priest, who was expelled from Jerusalem by Nehemiah, for marrying the daughter of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria; and who was constituted by Sanballat the first high priest of the temple at Samaria.[8] Now, by one or both of these means the Samaritans had the Pentateuch as well as the Jews; but with this difference, that the Samaritan Pentateuch was in the old Hebrew or Phenician charactèrs, in which it remains to this day; whereas the Jewish copy was changed into Chaldee

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[1] Deut. xxxi. 9—13.; Josh. viii. 34, 35.; Neh. viii. 1—5. [2] Deut. xxxi. 26.
[3] Deut. xvii. 18, 19. [4] Levit. x. 11. [5] Deut. vi. 7. [6] Deut. iv. 2. xii. 32.
[7] 2 Kings xvii. 27.
[8] Neh. xiii. 28. Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. xi. c. 8. Bp. Newton's Works, vol. i. p. 23.

characters (in which it also remains to this day), which were fairer and clearer than the Hebrew, the Jews having learned the Chaldee language during their seventy years' abode at Babylon. The jealousy and hatred, which subsisted between the Jews and Samaritans, made it impracticable for either nation to corrupt or alter the text in any thing of consequence without certain discovery; and the general agreement between the Hebrew and Samaritan copies of the Pentateuch, which are now extant, is such, as plainly demonstrates that the copies were originally the same. Nor can any better evidence be desired, that the Jewish Bibles have not been corrupted or interpolated, than this very book of the Samaritans; which, after more than two thousand years' discord between the two nations, varies as little from the other as any classic author in less tract of time has disagreed from itself by the unavoidable slips and mistakes of so many transcribers.[1]

After the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, the book of the law, and the prophets, were publicly read in their synagogues every Sabbath-day[2]; which was an excellent method of securing their purity, as well as of enforcing the observation of the law. The Chaldee paraphrases and the translation of the Old Testament into Greek, which were afterwards made, were so many additional securities. To these facts we may add, that the reverence of the Jews for their sacred writings is another guarantee for their integrity; so great indeed was that reverence, that, according to the statements of Philo and Josephus[3], they would suffer any torments, and even death itself, rather than change a single point or iota of the Scriptures. A law was also enacted by them, which denounced him to be guilty of inexpiable sin, who should presume to make the slightest possible alteration in their sacred books. The Jewish doctors, fearing to add any thing to the law, passed their own notions as traditions or explanations of it; and both Jesus Christ and his apostles accused the Jews of entertaining a prejudiced regard for those traditions, but they never charged them with falsifying or corrupting the Scriptures themselves. On the contrary, Christ urged them to *search the Scriptures*[4]; which he doubtless would have said with some caution if they had been falsified or corrupted; and he not only refers to the Scriptures in general, but appeals directly to the writings of Moses.[5] It is also known, that during the time of Christ the Jews were divided into various sects and parties, each of whom watched over the others with the greatest jealousy, so as to render any attempt at such falsification or corruption utterly impracticable. Since, then, the Jews could not falsify or corrupt the Hebrew Scriptures *before* the advent of Christ,

[ii.] *So neither were these writings falsified or corrupted* AFTER *the birth of Christ.*

For, since that event, the Old Testament has been held in high esteem both by Jews and Christians. The Jews also frequently suffered martyrdom for their Scriptures, which they would not have done, had they suspected them to have been corrupted or altered. Besides, the Jews and Christians were a mutual guard upon each other, which must have rendered any material corruption impossible, if it had been attempted; for if such an attempt had been made by the *Jews*, they would have been detected by the Christians. The accomplishment of such a design, indeed, would have been impracticable, from the moral impossibility of the Jews (who were dispersed in every country of the then known world) being able to collect all the then existing copies with the intention of corrupting or falsifying them. On the other hand, if any such attempt had been made by the *Christians*, it would assuredly have been detected by the Jews; nor could any such attempt have been made by any other man or body of men, without exposure both by Jews and Christians.

3. The admirable *Agreement of all the ancient Paraphrases and Versions*[6], and of the writings of Josephus, with the Old Testament as

[1] Dr. Bentley's Remarks on Freethinking, part i. remark 27. (vol. v. p. 144. of Bp. Randolph's Enchiridion Theologicum, 8vo. Oxford, 1792.)
[2] Acts xiii. 14, 15. 27.; Luke iv. 17—20.
[3] Philo, apud Euseb. de Præp. Evang. lib. viii. c. 2. Josephus contra Apion. lib. i. § 8.
[4] John v. 39. [5] John v. 46, 47.
[6] The Old Testament has been translated into a great number of languages; but the

it is now extant, together with the quotations which are made from it in the New Testament, and in the writings of all ages to the present time, forbid us to indulge any suspicion of any material corruption in the books of the Old Testament; and give us every possible evidence of which a subject of this kind is capable, that these books are now in our hands genuine and unadulterated.

4. Lastly, the *Agreement of all the Manuscripts of the Old Testament* (amounting to nearly eleven hundred and fifty), *which are known to be extant, is a clear proof of its uncorrupted preservation.*

These manuscripts, indeed, are not all entire; some contain one part and some another. But it is absolutely impossible that *every* manuscript, whether in the original Hebrew or in any ancient version or paraphrase, should or could be *designedly* altered or falsified in the *same* passages, without detection either by Jews or Christians. The manuscripts now extant are, confessedly, liable to errors and mistakes from the carelessness, negligence, or inaccuracy of copyists; but they are not *all* uniformly incorrect throughout, nor in the same words or passages; but what is incorrect in one place is correct in another. Although the various readings, which have been discovered by learned men, who have applied themselves to the collation of every known manuscript of the Hebrew Scriptures, amount to many thousands, yet these differences are of so little *real* moment, that their laborious collations afford us scarcely any opportunities of correcting the sacred text in important passages. So far, however, are these extensive and profound researches from being either trivial or nugatory, that we have, in fact, derived from them the greatest advantage which could have been wished for by any real friend of revealed religion; namely, the certain knowledge of the agreement of the copies of the ancient Scriptures, now extant in their original language, with each other and with our Bibles.[1]

II. Equally satisfactory is the evidence for the INTEGRITY AND UNCORRUPTNESS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT in any thing material. The

only versions, to which we shall now advert, are those which were made either previously to the Christian æra, or very shortly after its commencement. At that period, almost all the books of the Old Law had been translated into *Chaldee*, for the use of the Jews in the East, with whom the original Hebrew had ceased to be a living language; the whole had been rendered into Greek (two hundred and eighty or eighty-two years before the birth of Jesus Christ) for the Jews of Alexandria, who were still less acquainted with Hebrew; and, at the close of the first, or very early in the second century, the Old Testament was translated into Syriac, for the Syrian Christians. These three versions have been preserved to our time; numerous manuscript copies and printed editions of them are extant; and, with the exception of a few unimportant differences, they represent to us the same text, the same books, the same predictions, and the same phrases. Now this agreement is not the result of any design on the part of the translators, or of any fraud on the part of learned men. These three sister versions, having once issued from their common parent, have been for ever separated by events and by a rivalship which still subsists. The Chaldee version, which was carefully preserved and consulted by the Hebrews, remained unknown to Christians during the early ages of the church, and has been in their hands only for two or three centuries. The Christians of Syria knew as little of the Greek version as the Greeks did of the Syriac; and the Greek version,—which was diffused throughout the West, and translated in its turn into Latin, and which, under this second form, became the object of exclusive respect in the Romish Church,—could not borrow any thing from the other versions, of the existence of which the inhabitants of the West were utterly ignorant. The agreement, therefore, of these three witnesses, is so much the more remarkable, as they never could have heard that these versions belonged to rival and hostile churches, and were the work of inveterate enemies, of Christians and Jews, of Eastern and Western Christians, of Jews of Palestine, and Alexandrian Jews. They do, however, agree together. Therefore they give us, with certainty, the ancient and true text of the Old Testament, precisely as it was extant before the time of Jesus Christ. Cellérier, de l'Origine Authentique et Divine de l'Ancien Testament, pp. 148—151.

[1] Bp. Tomline's Elements of Christ. Theol. vol. i. p. 13.

testimonies, adduced in the preceding section in behalf of the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament, are, in a great measure, applicable to show that it has been transmitted to us entire and uncorrupted. But, to be more particular, we remark,

1. *That the uncorrupted preservation of the books of the New Testament is manifest, from their Contents;*

For, so early as the two first centuries of the Christian æra, we find the very same *facts* (not myths), and the very same *doctrines*, universally received by the Christians, which we of the present day believe on the credit of the New Testament.

2. *Because an universal corruption of those writings was both impossible and impracticable, nor can the least vestige of such a corruption be found in history.*

[i.] They could not be corrupted during the lives of their authors; and before their death copies were dispersed among the different communities of Christians, who were scattered throughout the then known world. Within twenty years after the ascension, churches were formed in the principal cities of the Roman empire; and in all these churches the books of the New Testament, especially the four Gospels, were read as a part of their public worship, just as the writings of Moses and the Prophets were read in the Jewish synagogues.[1] Nor would the use of them be confined to public worship; for these books were not, like the Sibylline Oracles, locked up from the perusal of the public, but were exposed to public investigation. When the books of the New Testament were first published to the world, the Christians would naturally entertain the highest esteem and reverence for writings that delivered an *authentic* and inspired history of the life and doctrines of Jesus Christ, and would be desirous of possessing such an invaluable treasure. Hence, as we learn from unquestionable authority, copies were multiplied and disseminated as rapidly as the boundaries of the church increased; and translations were made into as many languages as were spoken by its professors, some of which remain to this day; so that it would very soon be rendered absolutely impossible to corrupt these books in any one important word or phrase. Now it is not to be supposed (without violating all probability), that *all* Christians should agree in a design of changing or corrupting the original books; and if *some* only should make the attempt, the uncorrupted copies would still remain to detect them. And supposing there was some error in one translation or copy, or something changed, added, or taken away; yet there were many other copies and other translations, by the help of which the neglect or fraud might be or would be corrected.

[ii.] Further, as these books could not be corrupted during the lives of their respective authors, and while a great number of witnesses was alive to attest the facts which they record; *so neither could any material alteration take place* AFTER *their decease*, without being detected while the original manuscripts were preserved in the churches. The Christians, who were instructed by the apostles or by their immediate successors, travelled into all parts of the world, carrying with them copies of their writings; from which other copies were multiplied and preserved. Now (as we have already seen[2]), we have an unbroken series of testimonies for the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament, which can be traced backwards from the fourth century of the Christian æra to the very time of the apostles; and these very testimonies are equally applicable to prove its uncorrupted preservation. Moreover, harmonies of the four Gospels were anciently constructed; commentaries were written upon them, as well as upon the other books of the New Testament (many of which are still extant), manuscripts were collated, and editions of the New Testament were put forth. These sacred records, being universally regarded as the supreme standard of truth, were received by every class of Chris-

[1] Dr. Lardner has collected numerous instances in the second part of his Credibility of the Gospel History; references to which may be seen in the general index to his works, article *Scriptures.* See particularly the testimonies of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, and Augustine.

[2] See pp. 70—85. *supra.*

tians with peculiar respect, as being divine compositions, and possessing an authority belonging to no other books. Whatever controversies, therefore, arose among different sects (and the church was very early rent with fierce contentions on doctrinal points), the Scriptures of the New Testament were received and appealed to by every one of them, as being conclusive in all matters of controversy; consequently it was morally impossible, and in itself impracticable, that any man or body of men should corrupt or falsify them in any fundamental article, should foist into them a single expression to favour their peculiar tenets, or erase a single sentence, without being detected by thousands. "If one party was inclined either to omit what opposed their peculiar tenets, or to insert what might afford them additional support, there was always some other party both ready and willing to detect the fraud. And even if they persevered in altering their *own* manuscripts, they had not the power of altering the manuscripts in the hands of their opponents. Though the corruption therefore might be partial, it could not become general. Nor must we forget that the books which compose the Greek Testament have been transcribed, beyond all comparison, more frequently than the works of any other Greek author. And it is evident that the difficulty of corrupting the Greek manuscripts must have increased with every increase in their number. Though it cannot be denied, therefore, that there is stronger temptation to alter a work which relates to doctrines, than to alter a work which relates to matters indifferent, the impediments to the alteration of the Greek manuscripts were still more powerful than the temptation. The Gospels, which were written in different places, and the Epistles, which were addressed to different communities, were multiplied in copies, dispersed in Palestine and Egypt, in Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy. Under such circumstances a general corruption of the Greek manuscripts was a thing impossible, for it could not have been effected without a union of sentiment, which never existed, nor without a general combination, which could not have been formed before Christianity had received a civil establishment. But if such a combination had been practicable, it could not have been carried into effect without becoming a matter of general notoriety. And ecclesiastical historians are *silent* on such a combination. The *silence* of history is indeed no argument against the truth of a fact established by induction, if the fact was such that it could not be generally known. But the silence of history is important in reference to a fact which, if it ever existed, *must* have been a subject of general notoriety. Whatever corruptions, therefore, may have taken place in the Greek manuscripts, those corruptions must have been confined to a few, and could not, by any possibility, have been extended to them all."[1] Indeed, though all the Christian doctors, who were dispersed throughout the world, should have conspired to corrupt the New Testament, yet the people would never have consented to it; and if even both teachers and people had been disposed to have committed such a fraud, most unquestionably their adversaries would not fail to have reproached them with it. The Jews and Heathens, whose only aim was to decry and put down their religion, would never have concealed it. Celsus, Porphyry, Julian, and other acute enemies of the Christians, would have derived some advantage from such corruption. In a word, even though the silence of their adversaries had favoured so strange an enterprise, yet the different parties and various heresies, which soon after sprang up among Christians, were an insuperable obstacle to it. Indeed, if any material alteration had been attempted by the orthodox, it would have been detected by the heretics; and, on the other hand, if a heretic had inserted, altered, or falsified any thing, he would have been exposed by the orthodox, or by other heretics. It is well known that a division commenced in the fourth century, between the eastern and western churches, which, about the middle of the ninth century, became irreconcileable, and subsists to the present day. Now it would have been impossible to alter all the copies in the eastern empire; and if it had been possible in the east, the copies in the west would have detected the alteration. But, in fact, both the eastern and western copies agree, which could not be expected if either of them was altered or falsified.

3. The uncorrupted preservation of the New Testament is further evident, *from the Agreement of all the Manuscripts.*

[1] Bp. Marsh's Lectures, part vi. pp. 10, 11.

The manuscripts of the New Testament which are extant are far more numerous than those of any *single* classic author whomsoever: there have been examined, in a greater or less degree, about six hundred and seventy manuscripts.[1] These manuscripts, it is true, are not all entire; most of them contain only the Gospels; others, the Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles; and a few contain the Apocalypse or Revelation of John. But they were all written in very different and distant parts of the world; and they have been found in places widely remote from each other, in Asia, in Africa, and from one extremity of Europe to the other. Several of them are upwards of twelve hundred years old, and give us the books of the New Testament, in all essential points, perfectly accordant with each other, as any person may readily ascertain by examining the critical editions published by Mill, Kuster, Bengel, Wetstein, Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann, and Tischendorf.[2] The *thirty thousand* various readings[3], which are said to be found in the manuscripts collated by Dr. Mill, and the *hundred and fifty thousand* which Griesbach's edition is said to contain, in no degree whatever affect the general credit and integrity of the text. In fact, the more copies are multiplied, and the more numerous are the transcripts and translations from the original, the more likely is it that the genuine text and the true original reading will be investigated and ascertained. The most correct and accurate ancient classics now extant are those of which we have the greatest number of manuscripts; and the most *depraved*, *mutilated*, and *inaccurate* editions of the old writers are those of which we have the fewest manuscripts, and perhaps only a single manuscript extant. Such are Athenæus, Clemens Romanus, Hesychius, and Photius. But of this formidable mass of various readings, which have been collected by the diligence of collators, not one tenth — nay, not one hundredth part — either makes or can make any perceptible, or at least any material, alteration in the sense in any modern version. They consist almost wholly of palpable errors in transcription, grammatical and verbal differences, such as the insertion or omission of an article, the substitution of a word for its equivalent, and the transposition of a word or two in a sentence. Even the few that do change the sense, affect it only in passages relating to unimportant, historical, and geographical circumstances, or other collateral matters; and the still smaller number that make any alteration in things of consequence, do not on that account place us in any absolute uncertainty. For, either the true reading may be discovered by collating the other manuscripts, versions, and quotations found in the works of the ancients; or, should these fail to give us the requisite information, we are enabled to explain the doctrine in question from other *undisputed* passages of Holy Writ. This observation particularly applies to the doctrines of the deity of Jesus Christ and of the Trinity; which some persons have attempted to expunge from the New Testament, because a few controverted passages have been cited in proof of them; but these doctrines are written, as with a sunbeam, in other parts of the New Testament. *The very worst manuscript extant would not pervert one article of our faith, or destroy one moral precept, not elsewhere given in the most explicit terms.* All the *omissions* of the ancient manuscripts put together could not countenance the omission of one essential doctrine of the Gospel, relating either to faith or morals; and all the *additions*, countenanced by the whole mass of manuscripts already collated, do not introduce a single point essential either to faith or manners beyond what may be found in the Complutensian or Elzevir editions. The general uniformity, therefore, of the manuscripts of the New Testament, which are dispersed through all the countries in the known world, and in so great a variety of languages, is truly astonishing, and demonstrates both the veneration in which the Scriptures have uniformly been held, and the singular care which was taken in transcribing them; and so far are the various readings contained in these manuscripts from being hostile to the uncorrupted preservation of the books of the New Testament (as some sceptics have boldly affirmed, and some timid Christians have apprehended),

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[1] Scholz, Nov. Test. Græcum Prolegom. cap. vi. vol. i. pp. xxxviii.—cxix.

[2] See an account of the principal ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, *infra*, Vol. IV. pp. 151—224.; and of the critical editions above mentioned in pp. 125, 126. 128—140. of the same volume.

[3] The various readings in the New Testament are fully considered, *infra*, in Vol. IV. pp. 48—65.

that they afford us, on the contrary, an additional and most convincing proof that they exist at present, in all essential points, precisely the same as they were when they left the hands of their authors.

The existence of various readings affords no just inference against the divine inspiration of the prophets and apostles. "We all distinguish between the *substance* and the *circumstances* of a work, though we may not be able to draw with accuracy the line between the one and the other. No one doubts that he possesses in general the *sense* of a valuable author, whether ancient or modern, because of some defects or interpolations in the copy, or because he may be uncertain respecting the true reading in some inconsiderable passage. The narrative of an historian, and the deposition of a witness in a court of justice, may impress the mind as true, notwithstanding they contain some mistakes and inconsistences. I do not know why a degree of precision should be deemed requisite for a divine communication, which is not thought necessary for human testimony; or why a standing miracle should be wrought to prevent accidents happening to a sacred book, which are never supposed to affect the credit or utility of profane writings."[1]

4. The last testimony, to be adduced for the integrity and incorruptness of the New Testament, is furnished by the *agreement of the Ancient Versions and Quotations from it, which are made in the writings of the Christians of the first three centuries, and in those of the succeeding fathers of the church.*

The testimony of Versions, and the evidence of the fathers and other early ecclesiastical writers, have already been noticed as a proof of the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament.[2] The Quotations from the New Testament in the writings of the fathers are so numerous, that (as it has been frequently observed) the whole body of the Gospels and Epistles might be compiled from the various passages dispersed in their commentaries and other writings. And though these citations were, in many instances, made from memory, yet, being always made with due attention to the sense and meaning, and most commonly with regard to the words as well as to the *order* of the words, they correspond with the original records from which they were extracted: — an irrefragable argument this, of the purity and integrity with which the New Testament has been preserved. The idle objection, therefore, to the incorruptness of the New Testament, which some opposers of divine revelation have endeavoured to raise, on an alleged alteration of the Gospels in the fourth century by order of the emperor Anastasius, falls completely to the ground for want of proof.[3] Nor do we hazard too much in saying, that if all the ancient writings now extant in Europe were collected together, the bulk of them would by no means be comparable to that of the quotations taken

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[1] Rev. R. Burnside's "Religion of Mankind, a Series of Essays," vol. i. p. 327.

[2] See pp. 70—93. *suprà.*

[3] The objection above alluded to is founded on the following passage, occurring in the Chronicle of Victor Tununensis, an African bishop, who flourished about the middle of the sixth century. "Messala V. C. Coss. Constantinopoli, jubente Anastasio Imperatore, sancta evangelia, tamquam ab idiotis evangelistis composita, reprehenduntur et emendantur." (Vict. Tun. Chron. p. 6. apud Scalig. Thes. Temp.) i.e. *In the consulship of Messala* (A.D. 506), *at Constantinople, by order of the emperor Anastasius, the holy Gospels, as being composed by illiterate evangelists, are censured and corrected.* On the objection to the integrity of the Gospels, which has been attempted to be founded on this passage, we may remark, in addition to the observations already given, first, that, whatever this design upon the Gospels was, it does not appear to have been put in execution; for if any falsification of them had been attempted, what tumults would it have raised in the East, where Anastasius was universally hated! It would, in fact, have cost that emperor his crown and his life. Secondly, if he had really designed to corrupt the purity of the Gospels, the historians of that time, who have not been backward in relating his other malpractices, would not fail to have recorded it as a standing monument of his infamy. But they are totally silent concerning any such attempt. See Millii Prolegomena ad Nov. Test. §§ 1014, 1015. (p. 98. edit. Kusteri); Dr. Bentley's Remarks on Freethinking, rem. xxxiii. (Enchiridion Theologicum, vol. v. pp. 175—186.); Dr. Ibbot's Discourses at the Boyle Lectures, vol. ii. pp. 759, 760. folio edit.

from the New Testament alone; so that a man might, with more semblance of reason, dispute whether the writings ascribed to Homer, Demosthenes, Virgil, or Cæsar, are in the main such as they left them, than he could question whether those of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, James, and Paul, are really their productions.[1]

III. Although we thus have every possible evidence that can be reasonably desired; yet, as there are some books cited or referred to in the Old and New Testaments, which are not now extant, it has been objected that some of those books are now *wanting*, which once were constituent parts of the Scriptures. A little consideration will suffice to show that this objection is utterly destitute of foundation, and that none of the writings which are accounted sacred by the Jews and Christians (and which claim to be received as inspired writings), ever were or could be lost; and, consequently, that no sacred or inspired writing is now wanting to complete the canon of Scripture.

1. In the first place, we may observe, that it seems very unsuitable to the ordinary conduct of Divine Providence, to suffer a book written under the influences of the Holy Spirit, to be lost.

It seems to be no small reflection on the wisdom of the Divine Being, to say, that he first influenced the writing of a set of books (that is, by his own extraordinary impressions on men's minds caused them to be written), and afterwards permitted them by chance, or the negligence of men, to be irrecoverably lost. If they were not serviceable to instruct and direct mankind in the methods of attaining the great ends of being, why were they at first given? If they were, it seems hard to imagine that the same kind Providence which gave them would again take them away. How high such a charge as this rises, both against the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence, may easily be perceived by every one who will think impartially on the matter. This argument becomes still more strong when we consider the great care which the Divine Being in all ages took to preserve those books which are now received into the canon of the Old Testament, even when the persons with whom they were intrusted were under circumstances, in which, without the influence of Heaven, it would have been almost impossible for them to have preserved them. To instance only that one time when the Jews were under the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes[2], when although that monster of iniquity laid their temple and their city waste, destroyed all the sacred books he could meet with, and at length published a decree, that all those should suffer immediately death who did not resign their copies, yet was the sacred volume safely preserved, and care was taken of it by its author.

2. The zeal of the faithful at all times for their sacred books was such as would be a very effectual means to secure them from perishing.

This is well known both of the Jews and Christians; and indeed no less can be reasonably imagined of those who looked upon these books as discovering the method of obtaining eternal life, and that religion for which they willingly sacri-

[1] Ernesti, Inst. Interp. Nov. Test. pp. 151—156. Lardner's Works, 8vo. vol. vi. pp. 650—672.; 4to. vol. iii. pp. 459—470. Stosch, De Canone, pp. 85. *et seq.* Moldenhawer, Introd. ad Lib. Bibl. pp. 196—198. Less, pp. 243—266. Dr. Harwood's Introd. to the New Test. vol. i. pp. 120—126. Michaelis, vol. i. pp. 23—69. and vol. ii. pp. 362—374. Dr. Nares's Remarks on the Unitarian Version of the New Testament, pp. xxix. xxx. 258, 259. Dr. Ryan's Evidences of the Mosaic and Christian Codes, pp. 152—159. Abbadie, Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, vol. ii. pp. 45—57. Vernet, Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, vol. iii. pp. 48—76. Dr. Bentley's Remarks on Freethinking, remark xxxii. (in Enchirid. Theol. vol. v. pp. 154—175.)

[2] Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xii. c. 7. See also 1 Macc. i. 56. 67.

ficed both themselves and all they had. Hence, as under the barbarous persecution of the Jews by Antiochus just mentioned, so also under persecutions of the Christians, no endeavours were wanting to extirpate and abolish the Scriptures. It is evident that the warm zeal and diligent care of the faithful preserved them; and although the emperor Dioclesian in his imperial edict, among other cruelties, enacted that all the sacred books should be burnt wherever they were found[1]; yet as the courage and resolution of the Christians baffled and frustrated the designs of his rage in all other instances, so they frustrated it very remarkably in this instance. Nor indeed could it be otherwise, when we consider,

3. That the canonical books, either in the original languages or by means of versions, were dispersed into the most distant countries, and in the possession of innumerable persons.

As the truth of this fact has been demonstrated in the two preceding sections of this chapter, we are authorised to infer how improbable it is, nay, almost impossible, that any book, so esteemed as the books of the Old and New Testaments were and still are, both by Jews and Christians, and which they severally believe to be divinely inspired,— so diffused into the most distant countries,—the copies of which, or of translations from them, would also be continually multiplying and increasing,—could by any accident or chance, by any human force or power, or much less by any careless neglect, be lost and irrecoverably perish.

IV. With regard to the Old Testament, more particularly, we may observe, that what has given credit to the objection, that some of the canonical books of Scripture are lost, is the common notion, that the books, so supposed to be lost, were *volumes* of some size, and all of them indited by the Holy Spirit. Now, in opposition to this erroneous notion, it is to be considered,

1. That the Hebrew word סֵפֶר (SePHeR), which we render *book*, properly signifies the bare rehearsal of any thing, or any kind of writing, however small; and it was the custom of the Jews to call every little memorandum by that name.

Thus, what we translate a *bill of divorcement* (Deut. xxiv. 1.) is in the original a *book of divorcement;* and the short account of the genealogy of Jesus Christ (Matt. i. 1.) is termed in the Hebrew idiom the *book of the generation of Jesus Christ*. So in Matt. xix. 7. and Mark x. 4. it is in the Greek a *book* of divorcement. In like manner, David's *letter* to Joab in 2. Sam. xi. 14, 15. is a *book* in the Hebrew and Greek; as also the king of Syria's letter to the king of Israel, mentioned in 2 Kings v. 5.[2]

2. That several of these tracts, which are not now extant, were written, not by persons pretending to any supernatural assistance, but by those who were styled recorders or writers of chronicles[3], an office of great honour and trust, but of a different kind from that of the prophets.

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. viii. c. 2.

[2] Many similar instances are to be found in ancient profane writers, in which *letters* are called *books*. One of the most striking is the following, taken from the father of profane history, as Herodotus is frequently called:—Relating the conspiracy of Harpagus against Astyages, king of Media, he says, that Harpagus communicated his intentions to Cyrus in a *letter;* which, as all the roads leading to Persia were guarded by the king's troops, he sewed up in the belly of a hare, and sent it to him by one of his most trusty domestics— *Λαγὸν μηχανησάμενος, καὶ ἀνασχίσας τούτου τὴν γαστέρα, καὶ οὐδὲν ἀποτίλας, ὡς δὲ εἶχε, οὕτω ἐσέθηκε* ΒΙΒΛΙΟΝ, *γράψας τά οἱ ἐδόκεε*. lib. i. c. 123. tom. i. p. 184. ed. Schweighaeuser. Londini. 1817.

[3] See 2 Sam. viii. 16. (marginal rendering) and 2 Kings xviii. 18.

3. But, supposing that the books in question were written by those who were truly prophets, yet they were not written by inspiration.

This argument is forcibly stated by Augustine[1] in the following manner: — "In the histories of the kings of Judah and Israel, several things are mentioned, which are not there explained, and are referred to as contained in other books which the prophets wrote: and sometimes the names of these prophets are mentioned; and yet these writings are not extant in the canon which the church of God receives. The reason of which I can account for in no other way, than by supposing that those very persons to whom the Holy Spirit revealed those things which are of the highest authority in religion, sometimes wrote only as faithful historians, and at other times as prophets under the influences of divine inspiration; and that these writings are so different from each other, that the one sort are to be imputed to themselves as the authors, the other to God, as speaking by them; the former are of service to increase our knowledge, the other of authority in religion, and canonical." In addition to this observation, we may remark, that the books of prophecy always have their authors' names expressed, and commonly they are repeated in the books themselves. But in the historical books there was not the same reason for specifying the names of their authors; because, in matters of fact which are past, an author may easily be disproved, if he relates what is false concerning his own times, or concerning times of which there are memorials still extant. But the credit of prophecies concerning things, which are not to come to pass for a very long time, must depend on the mission and authority of the prophet only; and therefore it was necessary that the names of the prophets should be annexed, in order that their predictions might be depended upon, when they were known to be delivered by men, who, by other predictions already fulfilled, had shown themselves to be true prophets.

4. The bare citation of any book in an allowedly canonical writing is not sufficient to prove that such book ever was canonical.

If this were to be admitted, we must receive as the word of God the Greek poems of Aratus, Menander, and Epimenides, for passages are quoted from them by Paul.[2]

5. Lastly, we may observe that most of the pieces supposed to be lost are still remaining in the Scriptures, though under different appellations; and that such as are *not* to be found there were never designed for religious instruction, nor are they essential to the salvation of mankind. In illustration of this remark, we may adduce the following examples, which are taken exclusively from the Old Testament. Thus,

[i.] The *Book of the Covenant*, mentioned in Exod. xxiv. 7., which is supposed to be lost, is not a distinct book from the body of the Jewish laws; for whoever *impartially* examines that passage will find that the book referred to is nothing else but a collection of such injunctions and exhortations as are expressly laid down in the four preceding chapters.

[ii.] The *Book of the Wars of the Lord*, cited in Numb. xxi. 14., and supposed also to be lost, is, in the opinion of an eminent critic[3], that very record which, upon the defeat of the Amalekites, Moses was commanded to make as a memorial of it, and *to rehearse it in the ears of Joshua*. So that it seems to be nothing more than a short account of that victory, together with some directions for Joshua's private use and conduct in the management of the subsequent war, but in no respect whatever dictated by divine inspiration, and consequently no part of the canonical Scriptures.

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[1] De Civitate Dei, lib. xviii. c. 38.

[2] Aratus is cited in Acts xvii. 28.; Menander in 1 Cor. xv. 33.; and Epimenides in Titus i. 12.

[3] Dr. Lightfoot.

[iii.] The *Book of Jasher*, mentioned in Josh. x. 13., is supposed by some to be the same with the book of Judges, because we find mentioned therein of the sun's standing still; but the conjecture of Josephus[1] seems to be better founded, viz. that it was composed of certain records, (kept in a safe place at that time, and afterwards removed into the temple,) which contained an account of what happened to the Jews from year to year, and particularly of the sun's standing still, and also directions for the use of the bow (see 2 Sam. i. 18.), that is, directions for instituting archery and maintaining military exercises. So that this was not the work of an inspired person, but of some common historiographer, who wrote the annals of his own time, and might therefore deserve the name of Jasher, or the upright; because what he wrote was generally deemed a true and authentic account of all the events and occurrences which had then happened.[2]

[iv.] Once more, the several books of Solomon, mentioned in 1 Kings iv. 32, 33., were no part of the canonical Scriptures. His '*Three thousand Proverbs*' were perhaps only spoken, not committed to writing. His '*Songs*,' which were *one thousand and five* in number, were in all probability his juvenile compositions; and his universal history of vegetables, and that of animals of all kinds, belonged to philosophy. It was not necessary for every one to be acquainted with them; and though the loss of them (considering the unequalled wisdom conferred upon their author) is to be deplored, yet it is a loss which only the busy investigators of nature have cause to lament.

Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that if any books of the Old Testament *seem* to be wanting in our present canon, they are either such as lie unobserved under other denominations; or they are such as *never* were accounted canonical, such as contained no points essential to the salvation of man, and consequently such of which we may safely live ignorant here, and for which we shall never be responsible hereafter.[3]

V. Equally satisfactory is the evidence to show that none of the books of the New Testament have at any time been lost. Some learned men, indeed, have imagined that they have found allusions to writings in the New Testament, from which they have been persuaded that Paul wrote several other canonical epistles to the Christian churches besides those we now have: but a little examination of the passages referred to will show that their conjectures have no foundation.

1. Thus in 1 Cor. v. 9. the following words occur—Ἔγραψα ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ, which in our version is rendered, *I have written to you in an epistle.* From this text it has been supposed that Paul had already written to the Corinthians an epistle which is no longer extant[4], and to which he alludes: while others assert that by τῇ ἐπιστολῇ he means only the epistle which he is writing; but this is not the most obvious meaning of the passage. And others are of opinion,

[1] Joseph. Ant. Jud. lib. v. c. 2.

[2] In 1751, a volume, purporting to be the long-lost "Book of Jasher," was published (anonymously) by Jacob Ilive, an infidel printer of unsound mind. Of this forgery (which was reprinted in 1829) the reader will find an exposure and refutation in the Appendix to Vol. IV. Sect. VII. § 1. pp. 741—746.

[3] Edwards's Discourse concerning the Authority, Style, and Perfection of the Old and New Testaments, vol. iii. pp. 451—463. Jenkins's Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion, vol. ii. pp. 95—97. Jones on the Canon of the New Testament, vol. i. pp. 130—135.

[4] A pseudo-epistle of Paul to the Corinthians is extant in the *Armenian* language; of which the reader will find an English translation, as also of a pretended epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, accompanied with satisfactory observations to prove their spuriousness, in Jones on the Canon, vol. i. pp. 143—147.

that Paul refers to an epistle which he had written, or begun to write, but had not sent; for, on receiving further information from Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, he suppressed that, and wrote this, in which he considers the subject more at large. From this last hypothesis the praise of ingenuity cannot be withheld: but as it is a mere conjecture, unsupported by facts, the more probable opinion is, that the apostle referred to some previous and *private* epistle which has not been preserved, and which had been sent to "the church of God at Corinth" (1 Cor. i. 2.) before their messengers had reached him. That epistle might have been very brief, and might have contained little more than the direction that the Corinthians should not associate with fornicators. "That this is the correct opinion may appear from the following considerations:—

"(1.) It is the *natural* and *obvious* interpretation — one that would strike the great mass of men. It is just such an expression as Paul *would* have used on the supposition that he *had* written a previous epistle.

"(2.) It is the very expression which he uses in 2 Cor. vii. 8., where he is referring to this epistle as one which he had sent to them.

"(3.) It is not true that Paul had in any former part of this epistle given this direction. He had commanded them to remove an incestuous person, and such a command might seem to imply that they ought not to keep company with such a person; but it was not a general command *not* to have intercourse with them.

"(4.) It is altogether probable that Paul would write more letters than we have preserved. We have but fourteen of his remaining. Yet he laboured many years; founded many churches; and had frequent occasion to write to them.

"(6.) In ver. 11. he expressly makes a distinction between the epistle which he was then writing and the former one. 'But now,' *i. e.* in this epistle, 'I have written (ἔγραψα) to you,' &c., an expression which he would not use if ver. 9. referred to the *same* epistle. These considerations seem to be unanswerable, and to prove that Paul had sent another epistle to *them* in which he had given this direction.

"(7.) This opinion accords with that of a very large number of commentators. If it be objected that this may affect the doctrine of the inspiration of the New Testament, since it is not to be supposed that God would suffer the writings of inspired men to be lost, we may reply,

"(i.) That there is no evidence that these writings were inspired. Paul often makes a distinction in regard to his own words and doctrines, as inspired or uninspired (see ch. vii.); and the same thing may have occurred in his writings.

"(ii.) This does not affect the inspiration of the books which remain, even on the supposition that those which were lost were inspired. It does not prove that these are not from God. If a man loses a guinea it does not prove that those which he has *not* lost are counterfeit or worthless.

"(iii.) If inspired, they may have answered the purpose which was designed by their inspiration — and then have been suffered to be lost — as *all* inspired *books* will be destroyed at the end of the world.

"(iv.) It is to be remembered that a large part of the *discourses* of the inspired apostles, and even the Saviour himself (John xxi. 25.), have been lost. And why should it be deemed any more wonderful that inspired *books* should be lost, than inspired *oral teaching?* Why more wonderful that a brief letter of Paul should be destroyed than that numerous discourses of him 'who spake as never man spake,' should be lost to the world?"

(v.) The reverence of the first professors of Christianity for the writings by them accounted sacred, and their care for the preservation of them, were so great as to render it extremely improbable that a canonical book should be lost. "We should," therefore, "be thankful for the books that remain, and we may be assured that all the truth that is needful for our salvation has been preserved and is in our hands. That *any* inspired books have been preserved amidst the efforts which have been made to destroy them *all*, is more a matter of wonder than that a

few have been lost, and should rather lead us to gratitude that we have them than to grief that a few, probably relating to local and comparatively unimportant matters, have been destroyed." [1]

Upon the whole, therefore, we have no doubt that the two epistles still preserved are the only inspired and canonical epistles which Paul ever addressed to the Corinthians.[2]

2. In 2 Cor. x. 9—11. we read as follows: *That I may not seem as if I would terrify you* BY LETTERS. *For his* LETTERS, *saith* he (φησι), *are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible. Let such an one think this, that such as we are in word by* LETTERS *when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present.* Hence it has been argued that Paul had already written more than one — even several letters to the Corinthians.

But to this it is answered, that it is very common to speak of one epistle in the plural number, as all know; and Paul might well write as he here does, though he had hitherto sent only one epistle to the persons to whom he is writing. And from so long a letter as the first Epistle to the Corinthians is, men might form a good judgment concerning his manner of writing LETTERS, though they had seen no other.[3]

3. In Col. iv. 16. Paul desires the Colossians to send to Laodicea the epistle which they themselves had received, and to send for another from Laodicea, which was also to be read at Colossæ. His words are these: *When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea:* — καὶ τὴν ἐκ Λαοδικείας ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀναγνῶτε. Now the former part of this verse is clear: but it is not so clear what epistle St. Paul meant by ἡ ἐπιστολη ἐκ Λαοδικείας. These words have been interpreted three different ways.

(1.) Ἡ ἐπιστολη ἐκ Λαοδικείας has been explained, as denoting "an epistle which had been written from Laodicea to Paul." This epistle has been supposed to have contained several questions, proposed to the apostles by the Laodiceans, which he answered in the epistle to the Colossians; and hence it has been inferred that Paul ordered them to read the former, as being necessary toward a right understanding of the latter.

But this opinion is erroneous: for if Paul had received an epistle from Laodicea, the capital of Phrygia, he would have returned the answer to the questions which it contained to Laodicea itself, and not to a small town in the neighbourhood. Besides, there would have been a manifest impropriety in sending to the Colossians answers to questions with which they were not acquainted, and then, after they

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[1] Barnes's Notes on 1 Cor. v. 8. pp. 103, 104. New York, 1841. The opinion above given, that Paul referred to an earlier and now lost private epistle, is maintained by Calvin, Beza, Grotius, Cappel, Heinsius, Witsius, Le Clerc, Mill, Wetstein, Beausobre, Bishop Pearce, Dr. Doddridge, Mr. Scott, Michaelis, Storr, Rosenmüller, Hug, Schleusner, Olshausen, and Billroth after Neander.

[2] Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 62—68. Ferdinandi Stosch, ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΟΛΟΚΛΗΡΟΝ, sive Tractatus Theologicus de Epistolis Apostolorum non deperditis, pp. 75—94. (Groningen, 12m. 1753.) Rosenmüller, Scholia in N. T. tom. iv. pp. 71, 72. Dr. Lardner's Works, 8vo. vol. vi. pp. 668—671.; 4to. vol. iii. pp. 468, 469. Dr. John Edwards on the Authority, &c. of Scripture, vol. iii. pp. 467—469. Dr. Storr, Opuscula Academica, vol. ii. p. 279. Jones on the Canon, vol. i. pp. 136—142.

[3] Lardner's Works, 8vo. vol. vi. pp. 668.; 4to. vol. iii. pp. 467, 468.

had the epistle which contained the answers, desiring them to read that which contained the questions.

(2.) Another opinion is, that Paul meant an epistle which he himself had written at Laodicea, and sent from that place to Timothy, because the Greek subscription to the first epistle to Timothy is Πρός Τιμόθεον πρώτη ἐγράφη ἀπο Λαοδικείας. This opinion is defended by Theophylact: but it is undoubtedly false. For it is evident from Col. ii. 1. that Paul had never been at Laodicea, when he wrote his epistle to the Colossians; and if he had, he would not have distinguished an epistle, which he had written there, by the place where it was written, but by the person or community to which it was sent. It was not Paul's custom to date his epistles; for the subscriptions, which we now find annexed to them, were all added at a later period, and by unknown persons. If, therefore, he had meant an epistle, which he himself had written at Laodicea, he certainly would not have denoted it by the title of ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἐκ Λαοδικείας.

(3.) There remains, therefore, no other possible interpretation of these words, than an "epistle, which the Laodiceans had received from Paul," and which the Colossians were ordered to procure from Laodicea, when they communicated to the Laodiceans their own epistle.

But, as not one of the canonical epistles of Paul is addressed to the Laodiceans in particular, the question again occurs: Which, and where is this epistle?

1. There exists an epistle, which goes by the name of Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans.

This, however, is undoubtedly a forgery, though a very ancient one; for Theodoret, who lived in the fifth century, in his note on the passage in question, speaks of it as then extant. But this is manifestly a mere rhapsody, collected from Paul's other epistles, and which no critic can receive as a genuine work of the Apostle. It contains nothing which it was necessary for the Colossians to know, nothing that is not ten times better and more fully explained in the epistle which Paul sent to the Colossians; in short, nothing which could be suitable to Paul's design.[1]

2. As the epistle, therefore, which now goes by the name of the Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans, is a forgery, the Apostle might mean an epistle which he had sent to the Laodiceans, and which is now lost.

An objection, however, to this opinion, (namely, that he had sent an epistle to the Laodiceans in particular,) may be made from Col. iv. 15., where Paul requests the Colossians to salute Nymphas, who was a Laodicean. If he had written a particular epistle to the Laodiceans he would have saluted Nymphas rather in this epistle, than in that to the Colossians.

3. There remains a third explanation, which is not clogged with the preceding difficulty, namely, that Paul meant an epistle, which he had written partly but not solely for the use of the Laodiceans.

This epistle is supposed to be that which is called the Epistle to the Ephesians; because Laodicea was a church within the circuit of the church at Ephesus: and as Ephesus was the chief city of Proconsular Asia, this epistle may refer to the whole province.[2] But it is most probable that the epistle intended by Paul is that which he wrote *to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ* . . . . at Colosse (Col. i. 2.), and for the following reasons. "Laodicea was near to Colosse, and the church

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[1] An English Translation of the forged epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans is given *infra* in the Appendix to this volume, No. I. Sect. ii. § iii. 7.

[2] Michaelis, vol. iv. pp. 124—127. Edwards on the Perfection, &c. of Scripture, vol. iii. pp. 470, 471. Alber, Hermeneutica Novi Testamenti, tom. i. pp. 233, 234.

there was evidently exposed to the same dangers from philosophy and false teachers as that at Colosse. The counsels in this epistle, therefore, would be equally applicable to both. In 1 Thess. v. 27. the apostle also charges those to whom that epistle is addressed to see that it *be read unto all the holy brethren.* It is evident that the apostles designed that the letters which they addressed to the churches, should be read also by others, and should become the permanent source of instruction to the friends of Christ."[1]

The preceding are the most material instances which have afforded occasion for the supposition that Paul wrote epistles which are now lost. There are indeed three or four other examples, which have been conjectured to refer to lost epistles; but as these conjectures are founded on misconceptions of the Apostle's meaning, it is unnecessary to adduce them. We have, therefore, every reason to conclude that NO PART OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IS LOST, and that the canon of Scripture has descended to our times entire and uncorrupted.

CHAP. III.

ON THE CREDIBILITY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

SECT. I.

DIRECT EVIDENCES OF THE CREDIBILITY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

SATISFACTORY as the preceding considerations are, in demonstrating the genuineness, authenticity, and uncorrupted preservation of the books of the Old and New Testaments as *ancient writings,* yet they are not of themselves sufficient to determine their *credibility.* An author may write of events which have happened in his time and in the place of his residence, but should he be either credulous or a fanatic, or should we have reason to suspect his honesty, his evidence is of no value. In order, therefore, to establish the credibility of an author, we must examine more closely into his particular character, and inquire whether he possessed abilities sufficient to scrutinise the truth, and honesty enough faithfully to relate it as it happened.

That the histories contained in the Old and New Testaments are CREDIBLE; in other words, that there is as great a regard to be paid to them, as is due to other histories of allowed character and reputation, is a FACT, for the truth of which we have as great, if not greater, evidence than can be adduced in behalf of any other history. For the writers of these books had a perfect knowledge of the subjects which they relate, and their moral character, though rigidly tried, was never impeached by their keenest opponents: if there had been any falsehoods in the accounts of such transactions as were public and generally known, they would easily have been detected; and their statements are confirmed by monuments subsisting to this

[1] Barnes's Notes on Col. iv. 16. (New York, 1845. p. 328.)

very day, as also by the wonderful propagation and establishment of Christianity.

I. In the first place, THE WRITERS OF THE BOOKS OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS HAD A PERFECT KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECTS WHICH THEY RELATE; AND THEIR MORAL CHARACTER, THOUGH RIGIDLY TRIED, WAS NEVER IMPEACHED BY THEIR KEENEST OPPONENTS.

The authors of these books were, for the most part, contemporary with and eye-witnesses of the facts which they have recorded, and concerning which they had sufficient opportunity of acquiring full and satisfactory information; and those transactions or things which they did not see, they derived from the most certain evidences, and drew from the purest sources. If a man be deemed incompetent to record any thing but that which he sees, history is altogether useless; but a satisfactory degree of certainty is attainable on events of which we were not eye-witnesses; and no one who reads these pages doubts the signing of Magna Charta, or the battles of Agincourt or Waterloo, any more than if he had stood by and seen the latter fought, and the seal actually affixed to the former. We owe much to the integrity of others; and the mutual confidence, on which society is founded, requires with justice our assent to thousands of events, which took place long before we were born, or which, if contemporary with ourselves, were transacted at some remote spot on the face of the globe. Who will affirm that Rapin or Hume were incompetent to produce a history, which, making some allowances for human prejudices, is worthy the confidence and the credit of our countrymen? Yet neither the one nor the other was the witness of more than an insignificant portion of his voluminous production. But if, by drawing from pure sources, a man is to be deemed competent to relate facts, of which he was not an eye-witness, then the writers of the Bible, in those particular events of which they were not eye-witnesses, but which they affirm with confidence, are intitled to our credit.[1]

1. *With regard to the authors of the several books of the* OLD TESTAMENT, it is evident from the four last books of the Pentateuch, that Moses had a chief concern in all the transactions there related, as legislator and governor of the Jews.

"Moses was educated in the Egyptian court. He lived many years in the wilderness, and became, doubtless, intimately conversant with the whole Arabian Peninsula. He does not take up his geographical notions at hearsay. The objects which he describes he did not see with the hasty glance of a traveller, but with the practised eye of a native."[2] Every thing was done under his eye and cognisance; so that this part of the history, with the exception of the last chapter of Deuteronomy (which was added by a later writer), may, not improperly, be called the history or memoirs of his life and times. He speaks of himself, it is true, in the third person; but this affords no ground for suspecting either the genuineness of his writings or the credibility of their author. Xenophon, Cæsar, and Josephus write of themselves

[1] Dr. Collyer's Lectures on Scripture Facts, p. 553.
[2] British and Foreign Evangelical Review, vol. ii. p. 71.

in the third person; yet no one ever questions the genuineness or credibility of their writings on that account. And for the first book of the Pentateuch, or that of Genesis, we have already seen that he is competent to the relation of every event, and that he had sufficient authority for all the facts therein recorded.[1]

In like manner, the authors of the subsequent historical books, as Joshua, Samuel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, relate the transactions of which they were witnesses; and where they treat of events prior to their own times, or in which they did not actually participate, they derived their information from ancient coëval and public documents, with such care, as frequently to have preserved the very words and phrases of their authorities; and very often they have referred to the public annals which they consulted. Moreover, they published their writings in those times when such documents and annals were extant, and might be appealed to by their readers; who so highly approved of their writings, and recommended them to posterity, that they were preserved with more care than the more ancient and coëval monuments, which were lost in the lapse of time. So also the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and others, where they relate events that took place before their own times, derived their narratives of them from the authentic documents just noticed; but concerning the facts that occurred in their own times, which indeed, for the most part, relate to the degeneracy, corruption, or idolatry of their countrymen, whom they reproved for those crimes, and urged them to repentance, they are contemporary and native witnesses. But, supposing the authors of any of these books, — as those of Joshua and Samuel, — were not known, it would not follow (as some have objected) that because it was anonymous, it was therefore of no authority. The venerable record, called *Doomsday Book*[2], is anonymous, and was compiled, seven hundred and seventy years since, from various surveys (fragments of some of which are still extant); yet it is received as of the highest authority in the matters of fact of which it treats; and it is justly considered to be the most precious monument illustrative of the ancient condition of the kingdom, which has been preserved to our times. If this book has been preserved among the records of the realm, so were the Jewish records, several of which (as the books of Jasher, Abijah, Iddo, Jehu, and others that might be mentioned) are expressly cited. The books above mentioned are therefore books of authority, though it should be admitted that they were not written by the persons whose names they bear.[3]

[1] See pp. 50—57. *suprà.*

[2] Doomsday Book was completed A.D. 1086, by command of William the Conqueror.

[3] "If any one having access to the journals of the lords and commons, to the books of the treasury, war office, privy council, and other public documents, should at this day write an history of the reigns of George the First and Second, and should publish it without his name, would any man, three or four hundreds or thousands of years hence, question the authority of that book, when he knew that the whole British nation had received it as an authentic book, from the time of its first publication to the age in which he lived? This supposition is in point. The books of the Old Testament were composed from the records of the Jewish nation, and they have been received as true by that nation, from the time in which they were written to the present day. Dodsley's Annual Register is an anonymous

2. In like manner, the writers of the NEW TESTAMENT were contemporary with the facts which they have recorded, and had sufficient means of acquiring correct information concerning them. The chief writers of the New Testament are Matthew, John, Peter, James, and Jude, all Jews by birth, and resident at Jerusalem, the scene of the history which they relate. They were all the immediate disciples of Jesus Christ, and eye-witnesses of his miracles as well as of the wonderful effects produced by his discourses on the people. Paul, it is true, was a native of Tarsus, and *not* among those who had been the friends of Jesus and the eye-witnesses of his actions; but he had lived a long time at Jerusalem, had studied theology under Gamaliel (a Jewish teacher at that time in the highest repute), and diligently employed himself in acquiring a thorough knowledge of the Jewish religion. Mark, it is well known, composed his Gospel under the immediate inspection of Peter, and Luke composed his Gospel and Acts under the immediate inspection of Paul. Their histories, therefore, are of as great authority as if they had been written by the above-mentioned eye-witnesses.[1] It is an extraordinary but singular fact that no history since the commencement of the world has been written by an equal number of contemporary authors. We consider several histories as authentic, though there has not been transmitted to our times any authentic monument in writing, of equal antiquity with those facts of which we are fully persuaded. The history of Alexander, king of Macedon, and conqueror of Asia, is not attested by any contemporary author. And the same remark may be made on the history of Augustus, Tiberius, and others, of which no doubt can be entertained, though it has been written by authors who were not witnesses of the facts therein contained. It is exceedingly rare, when the facts are ancient, to have well circumstantiated proofs of the same date and age.

That all the writers of the New Testament were contemporaries with the events which they have related, is manifest from the following considerations. So many facts and circumstances, indeed (not myths) are recorded, that, if the narrative were not true, they might have been easily confuted. The scenes of the most material events are not laid in remote, obscure, or unfrequented places; the time fixed is not some distant age; nor is the account given obscure and general. The facts are related as of recent occurrence, some of them as having taken place at Jerusalem, then subject to the Roman government, and garrisoned by a band of Roman soldiers; others, as having happened at Cæsarea; others, in cities of great resort in Syria, and elsewhere. The Gospels are a history of no obscure

book, we only know the name of its editor; the New Annual Register is an anonymous book; the Reviews are anonymous books; but do we, or will our posterity, esteem these books as of no authority? On the contrary, they are admitted at present, and will be received in after ages, as authoritative records of the civil, military, and literary history of England, and of Europe. So little foundation is there for our being startled by the assertion, 'It is anonymous and without authority.'" Bp. Watson's Apology, in answer to Paine's Age of Reason, p. 36. 12mo. London, 1820.

[1] See the testimonies of Origen, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Papias, in Dr. Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel History, part ii. chapters 38. 27. 22. and 9.

person. Jesus Christ was a subject of universal curiosity; he preached and wrought miracles in the presence of thousands, and was frequently attended by great numbers of persons of all ranks and characters. When the high priest interrogated him concerning his disciples and doctrine, he answered, "I spake *openly to the world;* I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews *always resort,* and in secret have I said nothing" (John xviii. 20.); and he appealed to those who had heard him for the publicity of his conduct. Both Jews and Gentiles severely scrutinised his character and conduct; and he was ultimately put to death publicly, and during a solemn festival, when the Jews were assembled at Jerusalem. While the principal facts, related in the Gospels, were fresh in the memory of their countrymen, the four evangelists published their several memoirs of the life and death of Jesus Christ. In relating his miraculous operations, they mention the time, the place, the persons concerned, and the names of those whom he healed or raised from the dead. They delivered their histories to the people among whom he had lived, while that generation was alive who beheld the scenes which they had described. Now the enemies of Christ and his disciples were sufficiently able and willing to detect falsehoods, if there had been any, in these publications; their credit was at stake, and for their own vindication, it was incumbent on those who put him to death, and persecuted his disciples, to contradict their testimony, if any part of it had been false. But *no attempt was ever made to contradict or to refute such testimony;* on the contrary (as is shown in a subsequent page[1]), it is confirmed by the historical testimony of adversaries, and consequently the circumstantiality of the evangelical historians establishes their credibility. The same remark is applicable to the Acts of the Apostles, which, like the Gospels, were published in the place and among the people where the facts recorded were transacted, and were attested by those who opposed Christianity. "*What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell at Jerusalem,* AND WE CANNOT DENY IT." (Acts iv. 16.)

II. Secondly. IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY FALSEHOODS IN THE ACCOUNTS OF SUCH TRANSACTIONS AS WERE PUBLIC AND GENERALLY KNOWN, THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN EASILY DETECTED: FOR THESE ACCOUNTS WERE PUBLISHED AMONG THE PEOPLE WHO WITNESSED THE EVENTS WHICH THE HISTORIANS RELATED. BUT NO SUCH DETECTION EVER WAS OR COULD BE MADE IN THE WRITINGS OF THE AUTHORS OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

1. In fact, we cannot charge Moses with having asserted falsehoods in the writings which bear his name, without charging him with being the greatest knave as well as the most wicked impostor that ever lived. The injustice and impossibility of such charges as these (which, however, the impugners of the Scriptures persist in asserting, regardless of the convincing evidence to the contrary), will readily appear from the following considerations: —

[i.] It is almost incredible that so great an impostor as Moses

[1] See § 2. of the following section, pp. 162—188. *infrà.*

must have been, if he had asserted such falsehoods, could have given to men so perfect and holy a law as he did; which not only does not allow of the smallest sins, but also condemns every evil thought and every criminal desire. This at least must be conceded, that no impostor has ever yet been seen, who enacted such excellent laws as Moses did.

[ii.] As Moses did not impose upon others, so neither was he imposed upon himself; in other words, he was neither an enthusiast (that is, one labouring under the reflex influence of a heated imagination), nor a dupe to the imposition of others. This will be evident from a brief view of his early education and apparent temper of mind.

Moses was educated in all the learning of Egypt, which country (we know from profane writers) was at that time the seat of all the learning in the then known world; and though we cannot, at this distant period, ascertain all the particulars of which that learning consisted, yet we are told that he learned arithmetic, geometry, rhythm, harmony, medicine, music, philosophy as taught by hieroglyphics, astronomy, and the whole circle of the sciences in which the kings of Egypt were wont to be instructed. Now the effects of a profound knowledge of philosophy are very seldom either enthusiasm or superstition. Such knowledge, in an age when it was exclusively confined to the kings and priests of Egypt, might admirably qualify a man to make dupes of others, but it would have no tendency to make the possessor *himself* an enthusiast; though, for the purposes of deception, he might affect to view his own experiments in the light of miraculous interpositions from heaven. Moreover, the Hebrew legislator was brought up in all the luxury and refinement of a splendid court, which is obviously very far from being favourable to enthusiasm; and the temper of mind with which he describes himself to have received his commission, was not that of an enthusiast. The history of past ages shows us that an enthusiast sees no difficulties, dangers, or objections, no probabilities of disappointment in any thing he wishes to undertake. With *him* the conviction of a divine call is sufficient to silence every rational argument. But no such precipitate forwardness or rash confidence is to be traced in the conduct of Moses; on the contrary, we may plainly observe in him a very strong degree of reluctance to undertake the office of liberating the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage. Repeatedly did he request to be excused from the ungrateful task, and start every difficulty and objection, which the wit of man can imagine. "First, he asks, *Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh*, and that I should bring forth *the children of Israel out of Egypt?* (Exod. iii. 11.) Next he urges, *When I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you, and they shall say unto me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them?* (Exod. iii. 13.) Then he objects, *Behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice; for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee.* (Exod. iv. 1.) Afterwards his plea is, *O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken to thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.* (Exod. iv. 10.) At length, when all his objections are over-ruled, he fairly owns his utter dislike of the task, and beseeches God to appoint another. *O my Lord, send I pray thee by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.* (Exod. iv. 13.)" This reluctance is unaccountable on the supposition that Moses was a discontented and impatient enthusiast; but it is perfectly intelligible, if we allow him to have been free from that mental disorder, as the whole of his conduct, together with the sound moral feeling, and the deep political wisdom that pervade his code of laws, proclaim him to have been.[1]

[iii.] It is absolutely incredible that he should have imposed on the Israelites as true, things that were notoriously false, and of the falsehood of which they could convict him.

[1] Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, vol. i. pp. 210—224. in which the topics, above briefly noticed, are treated at length with great force of argument.

For he relates facts and events which had taken place in the presence of six hundred thousand men, and urges the reality and truth of those facts upon them as motives to believe and obey the new religion, which he introduced among them: *Ye* KNOW *this day*, says he, *for I speak not unto your children which have not known them;* and after relating a number of awful events, he concludes by saying, *for your* EYES *have seen all these great acts of the Lord which he did.* (Deut. xi. 2—7.) Is it likely that Moses could have established his authority among the Israelites (who on many occasions rebelled against him), by relating that he had performed various miracles in their behalf previously to their departure from Egypt, and that they had *seen* rivers turned into blood, — frogs filling the houses of the Egyptians, — their fields destroyed by hail and locusts, — their lands covered with darkness, — their first-born slain in one night, — the Red Sea forming a wall for the Israelites, but overwhelming their enemies, — a pillar of a cloud and of fire conducting them, — manna falling from heaven for their food, — the earth opening and destroying his opponents, — if all these things had been false? The facts and events related by Moses are of such a nature, as precludes the *possibility* of any imposition; and, by appealing to his adversaries, who witnessed the transactions he records, he has given the world the most incontestable evidences of his veracity as an historian, and also of his divine commission. Indeed, if Moses had not been directed and supported by supernatural aid, and by a divine commission, his attempt to release the Israelitish nation from their servitude in Egypt must have been characterised by no other term than adventurous folly; and all his subsequent proceedings must, in any other view of the fact, be regarded as imprudent and insane.[1]

[iv.] We cannot conceive for what end, or with what view, Moses could have invented all these things. Was it to acquire glory or riches? he does not appear to have sought either riches or profit. Though he had ample opportunities of aggrandising his family, he left not to his own children any office of honour or emolument; and, on his decease, he appointed an individual from another tribe to be the general who was to conduct the Israelites into the promised land. On the contrary, his writings are marked by the strictest veracity, candour, and impartiality.

If we consider those apologists for themselves, who have left us memoirs of their own lives, we shall find in most of them an ambitious display of those moral virtues, by which they desire to be distinguished; they lose no opportunity of setting forth the purity of their designs, and the integrity of their practice. The rest may do this with less pomp and affectation; they may preserve a modesty in the language, and a decent reserve in the air and cast of their narration; still, however, the same purpose is discoverable in all these writers, whether they openly proclaim or nicely suggest and insinuate their own importance. When men are actuated by a strong desire of appearing in the fairest light to others, it unavoidably breaks out in some shape or other, and all the indirect ways of address cannot conceal it from the intelligent observer. This remark we see exemplified in Xenophon and Julius Cæsar, two of the most extraordinary persons of the pagan world. They thought fit to record their own

[1] See this argument fully considered and illustrated in M. du Voisin's Autorité des Livres de Moyse, pp. 157—169.; and in Mr. Bryant's Dissertation on the Divine Mission of Moses, forming the fourth part of his Treatise on the Plagues inflicted upon the Egyptians (pp. 175—274.), London, 1810. 8vo. M. Cellérier has also collected many circumstances in the character and conduct of Moses (some few of which are similar to those above stated), but all of which, taken together, confirm his credibility as a writer, besides affording a strong evidence of his divine mission. De l'Origine Authentique et Divine de l'Ancien Testament, pp. 181—221. Genève, 1826. 12mo.

acts and achievements, and have done it with that air of neglect and unpretending simplicity, which has been the wonder of mankind. Yet, through all this apparent indifference, every one sees the real drift of these elaborate volumes; every one sees that they are composed in such a way as to excite the highest opinion, not only of their abilities as generals, but also of their justice, generosity, and benevolence, and, in short, of the moral qualities of their respective authors. It evidently appears that they designed to be their own panegyrists; though none but such men could have executed that design in so successful and inoffensive a manner. But, however accomplished these great men were, can we doubt but that many exceptionable steps were taken by them in the affairs they managed? that on some occasions, their prudence failed them, and their virtue in others? that their counsels and measures were conducted, at times, with too little honesty or too much passion? Yet, in vain shall we look for any thing of this sort in their large and particular histories. There, all is fair, judicious, and well advised; every thing speaks the virtuous man and able commander, and the obnoxious passages are either suppressed, or they are turned in such a way as to do honour to their relators.[1]

But now, if we turn to the authors of the Bible, we shall find no traces of their thus eulogising themselves. They narrate their story unambitiously, and without art. We find in it no exaggerations of what may be thought praiseworthy in themselves; no oblique encomiums on their own best qualities or actions; no complacent airs in the recital of what may reflect honour on their own characters; no studied reserve and refinement in the turn and language of their history.

More particularly, with respect to MOSES, whom we find mentioned by ancient writers with very high encomiums, we see him taking no advantage of his situation or talents, or placing them in the most advantageous point of view. On the contrary, he takes very particular notice of his own infirmities, as his want of eloquence, and being slow of speech (Exod. iv. 10.); of his impatience (Numb. xi. 10.); his unbelief (Num. xx. 12.); his rebelling against the commandment of God, for which he was excluded from entering the promised land (Num. xxvii. 14.); of his great anger (Exod. xi. 8.); and of his being very wroth. (Num. xvi. 15.) He takes notice of his repeated declining of the measures to which he was called[2], and ascribes the new modelling of the government to Jethro's advice, and not to his own wisdom and policy. In short, he spares neither himself, nor his people, nor their ancestors the patriarchs, nor his own family or relatives.

"Of the patriarchs he speaks in such a way as not only did not gratify the vanity of his countrymen, but such as must most severely wound their national pride: he ranks some of their ancestors very high indeed, as worshippers of the true God, and observers of his will, in the midst of a world rapidly degenerating into idolatry; yet there is not one of them (Joseph perhaps excepted) of whom he does not recount many weaknesses, which a zealous partisan would have been careful to suppress; and to many he imputes great crimes, which he never attempts to palliate or disguise. In this point, the advocates of infidelity may be appealed to as judges; they dwell upon the weaknesses and crimes of the patriarchs with great triumph; let them not deny, then, that the Scripture account of them is impartial and true in all its points, good as well as bad; and we fear not but it will be easily proved, that

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[1] Bp. Hurd's Works, vol. vii. pp. 179. 181.
[2] See the passages given in p. 124. *suprà.*

notwithstanding their weaknesses and even crimes, they were upon the whole, and considering the moral and religious state of the human mind in that age, characters not unworthy of pardon and acceptance with God, and fit instruments for the introduction of the divine dispensations. Of the Jewish nation in general, the author of the Pentateuch speaks, it may be said, not only impartially, but even severely; he does not conceal the weakness and obscurity of their first origin, that 'a Syrian ready to perish was their father;'[1] nor their long and degrading slavery in Egypt: their frequent murmurings and criminal distrust of God, notwithstanding his many interpositions in their favour; their criminal apostacy, rebellion, and resolution to return to Egypt, first, when they erected the golden calf at Mount Sinai[2]; and next, on the return of the spies from the land of Canaan, when they were so afraid of the inhabitants, that they durst not attack them[3]; he repeatedly reproaches the people with these crimes, and loads them with the epithets of stiff-necked, rebellious, and idolatrous[4]: he inculcates upon them most emphatically, that it was not for their own righteousness that God gave them possession of the promised land: he declares to them his conviction, that in their prosperity they would again[5] relapse into their rebellions and idolatries, and imitate the foul vices of those nations whom God had driven out from before them for these very crimes. Here again we may appeal to the judgment of infidels: they triumph in the apostacies and crimes of the Jews, and represent them as totally unworthy the divine protection and regard; surely then they must confess, that the historian who has thus described them is strictly impartial; and that as he has concealed nothing that would disgrace, we may also be confident that he has feigned nothing to exalt his countrymen; and admitting this, we may easily show that, notwithstanding the crimes and the stubbornness of the Jews, it was yet not unworthy of the divine wisdom to employ them as the medium of preserving the worship of the true God amidst an idolatrous world, and of preparing the way for the introduction of a pure and universal religion.

"The impartiality of the author of the Pentateuch is not less remarkable in the mode in which he speaks of the nearest relations and connections of the Jewish Lawgiver. His brother[6] Aaron is related to have been engaged in the great crime of setting up the golden calf, to have joined with his[7] sister Miriam in an unjustifiable attack on the authority of Moses, and to have offended God so much, that he was excluded from the promised land; and the[8] two eldest sons of Aaron are related to have been miraculously put to death by God himself, in consequence of their violating the ritual law. The tribe and kindred of the lawgiver are not represented as exempt from the criminal rebellion of the Jews on the return of the twelve spies: Caleb and Joshua, who alone had opposed it, were of different tribes, one of Judah, and the other of Ephraim. In a word, nothing in the narrative of the Pentateuch exalts the character of any of the near relatives of Moses and Aaron, except only in the instance of[9] Phinehas the grandson of Aaron; who, for his zeal in restraining and punishing the licentiousness and idolatry into which the Midianitish women had seduced his countrymen, was rewarded by the high priesthood being made hereditary in his family. Of the family of the legislator we are told nothing, but that his[10] father-in-law Jethro was a wise man, who suggested to Moses some regulations of utility; that his[11] wife was an Æthiopian woman, and as such the object of contempt and opposition even to his own brother and sister; and that he had two sons, of whom, or their families, the history takes no notice; so that nothing about them is known, but that they were undistinguished from the rest of the Levitical tribe. How different is all this from the embellishments of fiction or the exaggerations of vanity! How strongly does it carry with it the appearance of humility and truth!"[12]

The preceding observations are equally applicable to the writers who succeeded Moses; and who exhibit every mark of integrity in their character, temper, and manner of writing. They relate facts

[1] Deut. xxvi. 5 [2] Exod. xxxii. [3] Numb. xiii. and xiv.
[4] Vide in particular Deut. ix. also Exod. xxxii. [5] Vide Deut. xxxi.
[6] Exod. xxxii. [7] Numb. xii. [8] Numb. iii. 4. and Levit. x. 1—7.
[9] Numb. xxv. 7—13. [10] Exod. xviii. [11] Numb. xii. 1.
[12] Dr. Graves's Lectures on the Pentateuch, vol. i. pp. 54—57.

with the utmost simplicity. They appear to have no secular interest in view; nor can we conceive that they could possibly be under any such influence. On the contrary, they exposed themselves to many disadvantages. In relating the most wonderful facts, they make no apologies. They use no panegyric. There is nothing like flattery or reserve in their narrations, or their addresses. "Their own frailties and follies, and the misconduct of their greatest heroes and sovereigns, are recorded with singular and unexampled fidelity. They offer no palliation of their conduct; they conceal nothing; they alter nothing," however disgraceful to the Hebrew worthies and to the Hebrew nation. No *candid* reader can peruse their writings attentively, without observing that this is a just, though imperfect representation of their character; nor can any one suppose that men of such a character would wish to deceive their readers. And would the transactions recorded by them have been received as true by those who had the best means and opportunities of examining the truth of them, if they had not really and truly taken place?

2. Let us now direct our attention to the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles contained in the New Testament; and we shall see their credibility established upon evidence equally conclusive with that adduced for the Old Testament. For,

[i.] *The actions, ascribed to Jesus Christ in the New Testament, are of that description, that they* COULD NOT *have been recorded, if they had not been true.*

Independently of the miracles performed by Jesus Christ (which are fully investigated in a subsequent chapter[1]), "his general conduct, as described by the evangelists, is that of a person surpassing both in wisdom and in goodness the most perfect character that was ever drawn by Roman or by Grecian eloquence. The character of our Saviour, as represented by the evangelists, is not drawn in a *formal* manner, exhibiting at one view the various qualities of which that character is composed. The character of our Saviour must be learnt by comparing the facts recorded of him, with the situations in which he was placed, and the circumstances under which he acted. This comparison exhibits unshaken fortitude in the severest trials, calmness undisturbed by provocation, kindness returned for injury, and dignity maintained inviolate through every action of his life. Nor is the wisdom and the judgment displayed on every trying occasion less conspicuous in the character of our Saviour. At the same time we perceive the gradual unfolding of a scheme for the general welfare of mankind, a scheme uniform and consistent in all its parts, yet misunderstood *at first* by the apostles themselves, as being opposed to the general prejudices of the Jews. Facts of *this* description could not have been *invented* by the apostles. Plain and unlettered Jews, as the twelve apostles were, though adequate to the office of recording what they had seen and heard, were incapable of fabricating a series of actions which constitute the most exalted character that ever existed upon earth. If the learning and the ingenuity of Plato or Xenophon might have enabled them to draw a picture of Socrates more excellent than the original itself, it was not in the power of unlettered Jews to give ideal perfection to a character, which was itself imperfect, and to sustain that ideal perfection, as in a dramatic representation, through a series of imaginary events. Indeed it is highly probable, that the apostles and evangelists were not *wholly aware* of that perfection which they themselves have described. For that perfection is not contained in any formal panegyric, expressive of the writer's opinion, and indicating that opinion to the reader. It is known only by comparison and by inference. We are reduced, therefore, to this dilemma: — either the actions, which are

[1] See Chap. IV. Sect. II. pp. 203—270. *infrà.*

ascribed to our Saviour, are *truly* ascribed to him; or actions have been invented for a purpose, of which the inventors themselves were probably not aware, and applied to that purpose by means which the inventors did not possess. And when we further consider that the plan developed by those facts was in direct opposition to the notion of the Jews, respecting a temporal Messiah, we must believe in what was wholly impossible, if we believe, that unlettered Jews could have *invented* them."[1]

[ii.] *The apostles could not be deceived in the facts which they have recorded.* This will appear from the following considerations: —

(1.) They were *competent witnesses* of the facts which they attested, and on which the Christian religion is founded.

Their testimony did not relate to certain abstract points, in forming a judgment of which they might have been misled by the sophistry of others, or have erred through their own inadvertence and incapacity; nor to events which had happened before their birth, or in a distant region of the earth, concerning which, therefore, they might have received false information. It respected facts which they had witnessed with their eyes and with their ears. They had lived with Christ during his ministry, they had heard his discourses, and seen his wonderful works, and consequently received them on the testimony of their own senses. They all had the same knowledge, and in the same degree, and they agree in the same essential testimony. Now we may seek in vain for any thing of a similar nature in the whole universe. Contemporary authors themselves rarely *see* the facts which they relate; they are often in a distant country from that in which the event happened, and are informed of it only by public reports, which are seldom faithful in all points. And their want of exactness will be evident to any one who may undertake to compare the relations of different though contemporary writers.[2] If, indeed, it happens that an author be at the same time both historian and witness; — that he has accompanied the prince or general whose actions he relates, (as Polybius, the historian, accompanied the illustrious Roman general Scipio,) — that he has been his particular confidant, and has participated in his deliberations and councils; — in such a case we set a high value upon his memoirs; and should consider it an act of injustice, as well as a want of common honesty, to call them in question or doubt them, *without solid proofs*, even though such a writer's testimony be *single*. Further, we likewise highly value histories written by generals or princes[3], who relate their own actions with an air of sincerity and modesty, which leaves an appearance of probability in their writings, though otherwise their testimony might naturally be suspected.

What then must we think of the joint testimony of so many historians, who relate nothing but what they saw with their eyes, who were present at all the transactions, who heard each particular, and are themselves a great part of the history which they have written? Who can refuse to believe persons who write, as one of them does, in the following manner:—"*That*," says he, "*which was from the beginning*" (of Christ's ministry), "*which we have* HEARD, *which we have* SEEN *with our* EYES, *and our* HANDS *have* HANDLED *of the word of life*," (Christ and his Gospel) ..... "*that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you?*" (1 John i. 1—3.) If Plato has been deemed a competent witness, and in every respect qualified to compose the biographical account of his master Socrates, and of his discourses in prison before he drank of the poisoned bowl, because he was present on those occasions; or, to come nearer to our own times, if Mr. Boswell is considered as a competent witness to compose the life of the illustrious English moralist Dr. Johnson, because he was present at most of the conversations, &c. which he has related; or, if Sir

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[1] Bp. Marsh's Lectures, part vi. pp. 71—73.

[2] Witness the contradictory statements, in numerous particulars, published by various French, German, and English writers, relative to the momentous transactions of the campaigns of 1812—1814.

[3] Such are Xenophon's History of the Retreat of the Ten Thousand Greeks, and Cæsar's Commentaries on the Wars of the Romans with the Gauls, among the ancients; and, among the moderns, the Archduke Charles of Austria's Principles of Strategy, or the Science of War, as opposed to Military Tactics, or the Art of War, in which he has given the history of the campaign of 1796, in Germany.

William Forbes be considered a competent witness for writing the life of the acute detector of the sophistry of Hume, Dr. Beattie; or Mr. Hayley, for the life of the amiable poet Cowper, because they knew them intimately, conversed and corresponded with them, and had authentic information from the friends and correspondents of the eminent men whose lives they have written; surely the evangelical historians were equally competent witnesses of the facts which they have related!

(2.) Moreover, they were not *enthusiasts or fanatics.*

The characteristics of enthusiasm or fanaticism are, a blind credulity, in consequence of which its subject is led to imagine himself always to be the favourite of Heaven, and actuated by divine inspiration;—disorder and contradiction in the religious system proposed by the enthusiast;—and obscurity and absurdity in his exposition of it, accompanied with dictatorial positiveness, requiring an implicit credence of his pretensions, or at least on grounds as vain and delusive as those which have satisfied himself;—a morose, unsocial, and severe system of morality;—and contempt of all written revelation. But none of these characteristics is to be traced in the character or writings of the apostles. They became the disciples of Jesus Christ upon rational conviction,—not upon internal persuasion alone, but on the irrefragable evidence of clear and stupendous miracles, proofs submitted to their senses, and approved by their reason, which enthusiasm could not have counterfeited, and never would have required; and at every step of their progress, as their faith was called to signalise itself by new exertions, or to sustain new trials, it was fortified by new proofs. The slowness and caution with which the apostles received the fact of their Lord's resurrection from the dead fully exempt them from all suspicion of being the dupes of delusion and credulity. Throughout their various writings, the utmost impartiality, sobriety, modesty, and humility prevail. In the most frank and artless manner they do that which enthusiasts *never* do; they record their own mistakes, follies, and faults, and those of very serious magnitude, acknowledged to be such by themselves, and severely censured by their Master. No example of this nature can be found in the whole history of enthusiasm, and no other such example in the whole history of man. Enthusiasts also, in all their preaching and conversation on religious subjects, pour out with eagerness the dictates of passion and imagination; and never attempt to avail themselves of the facts or arguments, on which reason delights to rest. Strong pictures, vehement effusions of passion, violent exclamations, loudly vociferated and imperiously enjoined as objects of implicit faith and obedience, constitute the sum and substance of their addresses to mankind. They themselves believe, *because* they believe, and know, *because* they know; their conviction, instead of being (as it ought to be) the result of evidence, is the result of feeling merely. If any one attempt to persuade them that they are in an error, by reasoning, facts, and proofs, they regard him with a mixture of pity and contempt, for weakly opposing his twilight probabilities to their noonday certainty, and for preposterously labouring to illumine the sun with a taper. How contrary is all this to the conduct of the apostles! When a proof of *their* mission or doctrine was required of them, they appealed instantly and invariably to arguments, facts, and miracles. These convinced mankind *then*, and they produce the same conviction *now*. The lapse of more than seventeen centuries has detected them in no error, and in no degree enfeebled their strength. Their discourses were then, and are now, the most noble, rational, and satisfactory discourses on moral and religious subjects ever witnessed by mankind. There is not one single instance in them all, in which belief is demanded on any other grounds than these; and on these grounds it is always rightfully demanded; but on these grounds it is never demanded by enthusiasts. There is not in the world a stronger contrast to the preaching of enthusiasts, than that of Christ and his apostles.

Further, the style of fanatics is *always* obscure, arrogant, and violent. The style of the New Testament is the very reverse of this.

The utmost harmony exists through every part of the system of religion inculcated by its authors. The *historical* books are plain, calm, and unexaggerated; detailing the facts which establish the unparalleled perfection of their Divine Lord, with the particularity and consistency of truth. Some trifling discrepancies, it is

true, are found in the collateral circumstances related by the historians of Jesus Christ (and this is an evident proof that they did not copy one from another); but in all *essential matters* they entirely and perfectly agree; and the histories and doctrines recorded by them are perfectly accordant. And the *epistles*—though written at different and distant times, on various occasions, from different places, and addressed to very different communities, and persons—never contradict each other. On the contrary, they are uniformly, in the highest degree, natural, rational, and affectionate, admirably adapted to the occasions which produced them, and to the relations which their several writers bore to the various churches and persons whom they addressed:—instructing their ignorance, and encouraging their virtues,—rebuking their offences without bitterness,—vindicating their own character from calumny, without betraying any excessive resentment,—and maintaining their own authority, as religious instructors and guides, without any trace of spiritual pride, any arrogant claims to full perfection of virtue. So far are they from inculcating a gloomy devotion, or a morose, unsocial, or selfish system of morality, that, while they insist on the necessity of sincere, fervent, and heartfelt piety to God, without any affectation of rapturous ecstasy or extravagant fervour,—a piety, in short, chastened and controlled by humility and discretion,—they at the same time inculcate the strictest equity and justice in our intercourse with our fellow-men, together with the purest, most active, and most diffusive benevolence. While the just pre-eminence is allowed to internal sincerity, outward rites and observances have their due importance preserved; every grace, and every virtue, that can form a part of the Christian character, has its just order and value assigned to it in the Christian scheme; every civil, relative, and social duty is taught in the clearest manner, and enforced by the strongest motives. So far are the authors of the New Testament from contemning all written revelation, that in their writings they uniformly evince the greatest reverence for the written revelation of the Old Testament, which they exhort their disciples to study diligently [1], and point out its friendly harmony with the Christian system.[2] And though they insist on the necessity of receiving and believing that system [3], yet they equally condemn all spirit of persecution [4], and all religious indifference.[5]

[iii.] *They were neither deceived themselves, nor did or could they deceive, or impose upon, others.*

We have already remarked [6], that the evangelical historians were eye-witnesses of the facts they recorded; consequently *they could not be deceived* as to the actual occurrence of the facts and miracles related in the Gospels and Acts.

That they could not be imposed upon themselves is evident from the nature, number, and publicity of the miracles said to have been performed, first by Jesus Christ, and afterwards by his apostles. They saw diseases healed, the dumb made to speak, the power of hearing given to the deaf, the lame made to walk, the maimed (that is, those who *wanted* a limb) made *perfect* or whole, and the dead raised to life. They had the best possible information, and were fully convinced of the reality of such miracles. *Neither did they deceive or impose upon others.* The whole tenor of their lives demonstrated, and even their adversaries confessed, that they were men of piety and integrity. They never would have pretended to persuade (nor could they have succeeded in persuading) their countrymen and contemporaries, that a man, whose death was public and notorious, was risen again,—

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[1] 2 Tim. iii. 14—17.; 2 Pet. i. 19, 20.

[2] Acts ii. 14—36., xiii. 15—41.; Rom. iv. 10. 19—21. &c.

[3] Acts iv. 12.; Rom. iii. 20—26.

[4] Rom. xiv. 3—23.

[5] Dr. Graves's Essay on the Character of the Apostles, to prove that they were not enthusiasts, *passim*; Dr. Less on the Authenticity, &c. of the New Testament, pp. 280—299.; by both of whom the topics above glanced at are fully and ably illustrated. Lord Lyttleton has also applied similar considerations to the conversion of St. Paul, which he has shown to be an irrefragable argument for the truth of the Christian religion. See his "Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul,"—an inestimable little treatise, to which scepticism could never frame a reply.

[6] See pp. 129, 130. *suprà.*

that darkness had covered the land at the time of his execution, — and that there had been an earthquake at the moment of his decease, — if these events had not taken place. Besides, when it is recollected that the writers in question were men who had not received a learned education, and who were also of a very humble class in society, it is utterly improbable that they could pretend to speak foreign languages and upbraid an entire and numerous society with making a bad use of the same extraordinary gift, if that society had not received it.[1] Such pretensions, if false, could never have been admitted; and it were absurd, not to say impossible, that so many men should conspire to propagate a falsehood, especially at a time when even attendance on the ministers of Christ, much less the profession of his faith, exposed them to the severest persecutions and most imminent danger of their lives. Moreover, it rarely happens that any one will propagate a *deliberate falsehood*, without having some advantage in view, either immediate or remote. Now the first teachers of Christianity could have no prospect whatever of any advantage. They could expect none from him in whom they professed to believe. Jesus Christ, indeed, had warned them to expect persecution, ignominy, and death in this world, if they continued to be his disciples. They could not therefore aspire to honours or emoluments, for the distribution of these was in the hands of Jews and Heathens, who reviled and persecuted them with unrelenting severity. Still less could they expect to acquire wealth; for their profession of the Christian faith subjected them to the loss of all things. According to their own principles, either as Jews or Christians, they involved themselves in eternal misery, if they deliberately persevered in propagating falsehoods. Further, if the evangelists and apostles had confederated to impose upon mankind, it is incredible that none of their associates should not have confessed the fraud before the tribunals. It is equally incredible that so many precepts of piety and virtue should have been delivered by men of such abandoned principles, as they must have been if they had really been impostors; and it is still more incredible that they should have been willing to die for the cause of Christ, who, if he had not risen again from the dead, would have miserably deceived them. Still less is it to be credited that they performed miracles (the reality of which was acknowledged by their enemies) in confirmation of their doctrine. Lastly, if the apostles and evangelists had designed to impose upon mankind, they would have accommodated themselves to the humours of the people whom they addressed; they would have indulged their passions, and would carefully have avoided saying or doing any thing that might shock or offend them. Nothing of the kind was done by the apostles. They did not accommodate themselves to the dispositions of mankind; they boldly impugned the traditions of the Jews, and the religion of the Gentiles; nor would they suffer the law to be confounded with the Gospel, or the Mosaic ceremonies to be retained. They spared not the corruptions that prevailed in their times; they sought not to clothe their discourses or writings in the attractive garb of human eloquence, nor did they gratify the passions of their hearers. Would persons, deliberately confederating to impose upon the world, have pursued a conduct so little calculated to secure success to their designs? And as the evangelical historians were neither deceived nor imposed upon themselves, nor did deceive or impose upon others, so neither could they have successfully carried on such deceit or imposition, if they had been ever so much disposed or desirous to do it. For, as we have already had occasion incidentally to remark, the facts recorded by them were *public* facts. They were not done in a corner, but performed openly; and were openly related before all mankind. They were declared, not merely to the ignorant and illiterate, but to men of learning, leisure, sagacity, and power. Thousands *could* examine the truth of their story, and were under obligations to examine it; and, if it had been false to refute it. The importance and strangeness of the subject thus announced would naturally excite curiosity; and on this account it would certainly be examined by multitudes. If the report of the apostles and evangelists had not been true, it would have been the most ridiculous that can be imagined. If it *were* true, it was the most important that ever sounded in the ears of mortals. He must therefore be a strange man indeed, who could hear such things reported and repeatedly asserted (in whatever light he might consider them), without investigating the truth of them, the grounds on which the report was made, and the evidence by

[1] As Saint Paul upbraided the Church at Corinth. See 1 Cor. xiv.

which it was confirmed. So far, however, were the apostles from being either deceived themselves or deceivers of others, that,

[iv.] On the contrary, they were *men of the strictest integrity and sincerity.*

This is evident from the style and manner of their writings, which are characterised by the most rigid impartiality and fidelity. They were not ambitious of being known to the world by their writings, but wrote only as they were induced by necessity, for the further propagation of the Gospel.[1] "A statuary works upon marble; an historian upon facts; both cut them to their fancy, and pare off all that will not serve for their purpose. The writers of the New Testament stand remarkably clear from this imputation."

There is no preparation of events; there are no artful transitions or connections; no set character of persons to be introduced; no reflections on past actions, or on the authors of them; no excuses or apologies for such things, as a writer might probably foresee would shock and disturb his readers; no specious artifices, no plausible arguments to set off a doubtful action, and reconcile it to some other, or to the character of the person that did it. In short, it does not appear that it ever entered the minds of these writers, to consider how this or the other action would appear to mankind, or what objections might be raised against it. But, without at all attending to such a consideration, they lay the facts before the world, at no pains to think whether they will appear credible or not. If the reader will not credit their testimony, there is no help for it: they tell the truth and nothing else. Greater marks of sincerity than these it is impossible to find in any historical compositions that are extant; and they show that they published nothing to the world but what they believed themselves. They never attempt to astonish their readers, but uniformly endeavour to enlighten and convince them: regardless of themselves, they seem engrossed by the great truths, which they were commissioned to promulgate. They do not dissemble certain circumstances in the life and sufferings of their Master, which have no tendency to enhance his glory in the eyes of the world: such are the low circumstances of his parents,—the mean accommodations of his birth,—that when he appeared publicly to the world, his townsmen and near relations despised and rejected him,—that few among his followers were men conspicuous for wealth, dignity, or knowledge,—that the rulers, the scribes and pharisees, disowned his pretensions and opposed him continually,—that some, who for a time followed him, afterwards deserted him,—that he was betrayed into the hands of the high priests and rulers by one of those who had been selected for his constant companions,—and that he was crucified in the most ignominious manner with two malefactors. Had they been silent concerning such events, their adversaries assuredly never could have discovered them, nor, consequently, have taken any advantage of them. They have, however, not failed to relate them with all their minutest circumstances. Impostors would certainly have acted differently. They would either have kept back such facts as appear so disrespectful to their leader; or they would have endeavoured to assign some cause in order to obviate any bad impressions that might arise from them. They would enter into a laboured detail of the intellectual endowments or moral excellences of their Master. But the evangelists do no such thing. They utter no lofty panegyrics; they pronounce no eloquent encomiums. They depart from the common line of historians, and give an artless narrative of every circumstance, however apparently unfavourable to their Master, and leave the truth to support itself.

Again, when they relate any of the miracles of Jesus Christ, they announce them with the same dispassionate coolness as if they had been common transactions; saying nothing *previously* to raise expectation, nor, *after the recital of them*, breaking out into exclamations, but they leave the reader to draw his own conclusion. Does he confound and triumph over his enemies? We see no symptoms of exultation. Is he in the lowest distress? On their parts we can collect no tokens of fear, of grief, or indignation. Do they record his giving of sight to the blind,

[1] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 23.

restoring the lame, feeding many thousands with a few loaves and fishes, calming the raging sea, and even raising the dead? They seem perfectly calm and unconcerned. Do they narrate his resurrection and ascension? They afford no explanation of any difficulties; they never offer a single argument to enforce their credit; they leave the bare facts with their readers, who may receive or reject them as they please. In perusing the simple and unadorned narratives of the evangelists, it is impossible not to feel that the purport of their writing was *to bear witness of the truth*.

The conduct of the evangelists, when speaking of their enemies, is characterised by the same striking integrity. Of all who were concerned in the persecution and death of Christ, they mention by name only the high priest Caiaphas, and his coadjutor Annas, the Roman procurator Pilate, and the treacherous disciple Judas; because the suppression of their names would have impaired the evidence of their history to posterity. Not the slightest tincture of party-spirit is observable in the notice of these persons; who are barely mentioned without censure and without resentment. The epithet attached to Judas by all the evangelists (ὁ παραδοὺς, *who delivered him up*,) is expressive of the simple fact, rather than of its criminality; which would more aptly be signified by προδότης, *traitor*, as he is styled on one solitary occasion. (Luke vi. 16.)[1]

Further, it is worthy of remark, that the evangelical historians pay no regard to what others had *before* written on the same subject.

"Had they written in concert, and with the direct view of promoting the same cause, they would have taken proper care to have preserved some uniformity in their arrangement; to have supported the same facts, and not to have contradicted, in their narration, any of those facts or circumstances that had been recorded by their colleagues or friends. But if any one will read, with attention, their several histories, he will find a difference of arrangement, different facts and circumstances also brought forward by different historians, the same fact differently told, and many things so altered and changed in their different relations, that we are sometimes at a loss to determine, whether it be in reality the same fact, that any two or more of them are telling, or some other one nearly resembling it in some leading features. Matthew and Luke give us even different pedigrees of Jesus Christ. We mention this only to show that we have no reason to suppose, that they wrote in collusion; and also to show how inattentive they were to what others had written on the same subject before. Each appears to have written what struck him the most forcibly, and what seemed the most proper to make us acquainted with the character and doctrines of Jesus Christ. They are only careful to give them upon the best authority, either from their own personal knowledge, or as they had them from those, *who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word.* Like honest and faithful historians, they are concerned about nothing but the truth. In their histories, you meet with just such accounts as you may naturally expect from different observers of the same fact. No two men of equal capacity and attention ever yet related the same fact precisely in the same manner and words. Without the smallest prejudice or partiality, and with the strictest regard to truth, they will give you the circumstances of the same action with considerable difference."

The inferences, then, which we have a right to draw from this apparent honesty and impartiality of the sacred historians are, First, that the Gospel bears all the marks of a true history, and that the differences and trifling disagreements among the historians are a strong evidence of the truth of the whole. It is much more likely to be true, than if the whole had been transmitted to us by a single writer of the greatest ability. Secondly, that though we meet with

[1] The argument, here necessarily treated with brevity, is prosecuted at considerable length, and in the very words of the most learned defenders of Christianity, in Mr. Simpson's Internal and Presumptive Evidences of Christianity, pp. 126—142.

differences and difficulties in the relation of some material facts, yet none of these difficulties affect the main cause, or the leading principles of our religion. We are left in the full possession of all these. They all agree that Jesus Christ was upon this earth, that he was a divine teacher, and a great example, that he died and rose again. On the contrary, had they been all uniform in their narration, we should have had good cause to suspect fraud and collusion. Had they in the relation of each particular sermon, prayer, and great work, expressed themselves in the very same words, would not unbelievers have found good cause to allege, "these men are no more but copyists of one another, a company of men under the pretended direction of the spirit of truth, imposing a most impudent fraud on the world?"

These differences bear all the marks of candour, of honesty, and integrity. We know from them, that Jesus Christ was on this earth, that he wrought great works, that he delivered remarkable prophecies, that he died and rose again, that his disciples, immediately after his resurrection, with firmness embraced his cause, and, in obedience to his last commands, went and baptized all nations. We know, in short, that he brought life and immortality to light, and placed our hopes upon the best foundation. Let the learned, then, settle lesser supposed differences, and let cavillers dispute about dark expressions and darker tenets, we will hold fast by the main pillars; and if the world itself should sink, these will support us; this is our joy and rejoicing; in the strength of this, let us march onwards towards heaven.[1]

If, from the consideration of the narratives of the evangelical historians concerning their Master, we proceed to whatever is recorded concerning themselves, we shall find the same integrity and fidelity every where prevail. When Cicero had offended against the capital law of *his* moral code — that which enjoined the love of his country — first, by his backwardness to join the camp of Pompey, and afterwards by his prompt submission to the tyranny of Cæsar, what was the conduct of that illustrious Roman on this pressing occasion? Did he frankly condemn those false steps, or did he content himself with the simple relation of them? He did neither of these things. He softened and disguised the truth; and employed all his wit and eloquence to palliate this inglorious desertion of his principles to himself and to others. What a striking contrast is this to the ingenuousness of the evangelical writers! They study no arts of evasion or concealment. They honestly acknowledge not only the lowness of their station, but also the meanness of their original employments, the indigence of their circumstances, the inveteracy of their national prejudices, the slowness of their apprehension under so excellent a teacher, the weakness of their faith, the ambition of some of the disciples, the intolerant temper of others, and the worldly views of all. They even tell us of their cowardice in deserting their Master when he was seized by his enemies, and that after his crucifixion they all resumed their secular employments, — for ever resigning those hopes

[1] Popular Evidences of Natural Religion and Christianity, by the Rev. Thomas Watson, pp. 415—418.

which they had once fondly cherished, and abandoning the cause in which they had been so long engaged; notwithstanding all the proof that had been exhibited, and the conviction which they had before entertained, that Jesus was the Messiah, and his religion was from God. They mention, with many affecting circumstances, the incredulity of one of their associates, who was not convinced of the reality of their Lord's resurrection but by ocular and sensible demonstration. They might have concealed their own faults and follies from the world; or, if they had chosen to mention them, they might have alleged plausible reasons to soften and extenuate them. But they did no such thing; they related, without disguise, events and facts just as they happened, and left them to speak for themselves. In like manner, when recording the exercise of the miraculous powers with which they were endowed, they relate these astonishing facts, without any ornaments of language, in the most concise and simple manner. They do nothing, they assume nothing, in their own character. In short, they speak with such certainty, with so much self-conviction, and with such confidence in the truth of their history, that assuredly we can no longer depend on any historian whatever, if we entertain the least doubt concerning the integrity of the writers of the New Testament. And if we compare their merits as *historians* with that of other writers, we shall be convinced that they are inferior to none who ever wrote, with regard to knowledge of persons, acquaintance with facts, candour of mind, or reverence for truth.[1]

Lastly, in the Epistles of the Apostles which have been transmitted to us, there are preserved memorials of many particulars which are not very honourable to the first converts to Christianity. Such are the readiness of the churches of Galatia to depart from the purity and simplicity of the Gospel; — the scandalous disorders of the church of Corinth in some solemn parts of their worship; the contentions among them in behalf of their teachers; the preposterous use of the gift of tongues, proceeding from vanity and ostentation; and the unaccountable conceits of others, who depended upon an empty faith without works, and a speculative knowledge without a suitable holy practice, referred to in the Epistles of James and John. Upon the whole, it is most evident from the facts that were disadvantageous to Christ himself, to the writers themselves, and also to the first Christians, that those persons from whom we have received these accounts had a very particular regard to truth, and preferred its interest before all selfish considerations.

[v.] *They appealed to notorious proofs.*

Whatever internal marks of credibility the evangelical writings possess (and which could not but carry conviction to those to whom they were addressed), their authors confirm the veracity of their statements by an appeal to the miracles

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[1] Bonnet, Œuvres, tom. x. pp. 498—501. Dr. Hales's Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. pp. 693. *et seq.* Dr. Harwood's Introduction to the New Test. vol. i. pp. 6—10. Less on the Authenticity of the New Testament, pp. 267—330. Vernet, Traité de la Vérité de la Rel. Chrét. tom. iii. throughout, and tom. iv. pp. 9—137.

wrought by themselves, and to the extraordinary gifts conferred by them upon many other persons. This is evident from their epistles, which were written and directed to those who had beheld those miracles, and had participated in those gifts, and which also contain reproofs for the mismanagement of such gifts, and various directions respecting the better use and employment of them.[1] If these persons had not received such gifts, would this mode of writing and arguing have recommended the persons or doctrines of the apostles to them who were declining from both? Would they not have contradicted the apostles, as asserting deliberate falsehoods? But this was *never* attempted.

[vi.] *They suffered every thing for the truth of their narration, even death itself; and brought many of their contemporaries to a conviction of its truth.*

The history of the first professors of Christianity bears witness to the afflictions, sufferings, and painful deaths to which they were constantly exposed, and which they cheerfully endured for the sake of their testimony. If the things which they attested had been false, it would have been unparalleled madness for any one to persist in them to the loss of life; and it would have been incredible, that so many should conspire in the same unreasonable and unaccountable folly; especially when the religion which they professed excluded all liars from the happiness and rewards of the next life, of which they pretended to be persuaded: so that, whatsoever those persons might otherwise be, and however they might falsify, there is no reason to doubt of their truth and fidelity in this report, because they died for the testimony of it. Therefore the highest attestation of a thing is called martyrdom, and the most credible witnesses martyrs; and though bare martyrdom be not an argument of the infallible truth of a testimony, or of the infallibility of a person that gives it, yet it is one of the highest arguments that can be of his honesty and integrity in that thing, and that he believes it himself, otherwise he would not die for it; and it is a good evidence of the general integrity of these persons as to all other things, that they were so conscientious as not, for fear of death, to deny what they believed to be a truth, nor to conceal what they believed to be of importance.

Further, history shows that, by their testimony, the first disciples of Christianity so convinced a vast number of their contemporaries, who could without any trouble have proved the truth or falsehood of their statements, that even these encountered great persecutions, and cheerfully ventured estate, liberty, and even life itself, on the truth of the facts they asserted. Nor were the persons who thus embraced the Christian faith (notwithstanding all the sufferings which they knew that such profession would infallibly bring upon them) merely ignorant or illiterate individuals, who might be supposed to be hurried into a belief of it through a blind and thoughtless enthusiasm. On the contrary, among the first professors of Christianity we have instances of many persons of quality and rank, men capable of investigating truth and judging of its evidences, some of whom were philosophers and accurately acquainted with the best writings and with all the learning of the Gentiles.[2]

III. Thirdly, The credibility of the Old and New Testaments is further attested by the principal facts contained in them, being confirmed by certain commemorative ordinances, or monuments of great celebrity, that existed

[1] See 1 Cor. i. 4, 5., ii. 4, 5., v. 3—5., xii. xiii. 8., xiv. 1—33.; 2 Cor. xii. 7—11.; Gal. iii. 5.; 1 Thess. i. 5.

[2] Such were Sergius Paulus, proconsul of Cyprus (Acts xiii. 7—12.); Dionysius, a member of the senate or council of Areopagus, and many others of the polished and inquisitive Athenians (Acts xvii. 34.); Erastus, treasurer of Corinth; and even persons belonging to the imperial court (Rom. xvi. 23.); Justin Martyr, once a Platonic philosopher; and Athenagoras, an Athenian philosopher, who at first entertained so unfavourable an opinion of the Christian religion, that he determined to write against it, but on inquiring into the facts that supported it, was convinced by the blaze of evidence in its favour, and turned his designed invective into an elaborate apology. (Lardner, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 180—187.; 4to. vol. i. pp. 379—381.) To these may be added the eminent writers whose testimonies to the authenticity of the New Testament have already been cited, pp. 70—84. *suprà.*

AMONG THE JEWS AND CHRISTIANS FROM THE TIME WHEN THE EVENTS TOOK PLACE WHICH THEY ARE SAID TO COMMEMORATE, AND WHICH ORDINANCES OR MONUMENTS SUBSIST TO THE PRESENT DAY, WHEREVER EITHER JEWS OR CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE FOUND.

1. For instance, among the Jews, there are the ordinance of Circumcision, and the feasts of the Passover, of Tabernacles, and of Pentecost.

[i.] CIRCUMCISION is the seal of the covenant with Abraham, the great progenitor of the Jews, on all whose posterity it was enjoined. This rite was adopted by the Egyptians, Colchians, the Ethiopians, the Phœnicians, and one or two other ancient nations; but though its high antiquity ascended beyond the records of the pagans, no particular reason was assigned for it, except that some professed their adherence to it for the sake of cleanliness. Now it is this precise want of reason which constitutes the grand difference between the circumcision of the Gentiles and that of the Israelites. In the case of the Gentiles it proved no one historical fact: in the case of the Israelites, it proved the historical fact that Abraham was commanded to adopt the rite and to hand it down to his posterity as a badge of their being, in certain chosen lines, the peculiar people of Jehovah. This *fact*, which is a vital one in the Mosaic history, it decidedly and incontrovertibly establishes. For though the Israelites, like any other nation, might have *simply* adopted the rite of circumcision, yet they could not have adopted it as a commemorative ordinance, professing to commence from the time when the commemorative fact occurred, unless that fact really *had* occurred. The reason is obvious. If the belief, associated with the rite, had commenced at any given point of time *subsequent* to the adoption of the rite itself, the persons who first embraced the belief must unaccountably have suffered themselves to be persuaded, not only that such was the origin of the rite, but that they and their fathers before them, from the very time of its primeval institution, always *knew* and *believed* that such was its origin.[1]

[ii.] The PASSOVER was instituted to commemorate the protection of the Israelites when all the first-born of the Egyptians were destroyed, and their deliverance from bondage in Egypt, which was its immediate consequence. To this was added the solemn consecration of the first-born of man and beast to God; and in further commemoration of the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians, the tribe of Levi was set apart. The month in which this feast was solemnised, from being the seventh, was reckoned as the first month of the year, in order to mark it as the æra of this illustrious deliverance. The passover was eaten with bitter herbs, to remind the Israelites of their severe bondage and servile food in Egypt;—with unleavened bread, because the Egyptians, in their terror, urged them to depart, and would not allow them time to leaven their bread, *for they said, We be all dead men.* And it was likewise eaten in the posture of travellers just prepared for a journey, to mark its having immediately preceded their sudden and final departure from the house of bondage.

[iii.] The FEAST OF TABERNACLES was instituted to perpetuate the deliverance of the Israelites and their journeying in the desert. On this occasion they were commanded to dwell in tabernacles or booths, "made of the boughs of goodly trees." And,

[iv.] The FEAST OF PENTECOST was appointed fifty days after the passover, to commemorate the delivery of the Law from Mount Sinai, which took place fifty days after their departure from Egypt. At this festival, which was celebrated at that season of the year when their harvest usually closed, each head of a family was enjoined by the Jewish law to take some of the first-fruits of the earth, and bring it to the place which the Lord should choose, and to set it down before the altar of the Lord, making the solemn acknowledgment of the whole series of peculiar and miraculous providences experienced by the nation, which is prescribed in Deut. xxvi. 5—10.[2]

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[1] Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, vol. i. pp. 337—341.
[2] Du Voisin, Autorité des Livres de Moyse, pp. 169—172.

Now all these institutions have been held sacred among the Jews in all ages, since their appointment, and are solemnly and sacredly observed among them to this day. Can these observances be accounted for, on any principle but the evidence of the FACTS on which they were founded? We have not more certain evidence of the facts of the murder of King Charles I., contrary to all law and justice, and of the restoration of the profligate Charles II., and of the deliverance of King James I. and the English parliament from destruction by gunpowder (conspired by certain incendiaries), and of the arrival of King William III., which terminated the odious tyranny of James II., all which events are respectively commemorated on the thirtieth day of January, the twenty-ninth day of May, and the fifth of November in each year.

2. In like manner, the principal facts contained in the Gospels are confirmed by monuments, which subsist to this day among Christians, and which are the objects of men's senses. These monuments are the ordinances of Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the festival observed on the first day of the week.

[i.] It is a well-known fact that in all countries where the Christian faith is held, its professors are initiated by BAPTISM; and that by submitting to this rite they renounce every other religious institution, and bind themselves to the profession of the Gospel alone. Now Baptism, being performed in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, plainly signifies the firm persuasion of the Christian church that their religion is from God, the fountain of all good; that it was published to mankind by Jesus Christ the Son of God, the voluntary messenger of this dispensation; and that it was confirmed by many great signs, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Particularly on the part of those who administer this rite, it signifies that they act agreeably to the will of the Father who appointed the Christian Religion, and by express commandment from him, and from his Son who published it, as well as from the Holy Spirit, who confirmed it, when they baptize men into the belief and profession of Christianity. On the part of God this rite is a declaration, by his ministers, that he accepts and pardons the baptized person, provided he gives the answer of a good conscience, and in his subsequent life acts agreeably to the obligations of baptism. And lastly, on the part of the baptized, their receiving of this rite is understood to be an affectionate and solemn public declaration of *their* sense of the relation in which they stand to God the Father as their Creator, to God the Son as their Redeemer, and to God the Holy Spirit as their Sanctifier, according to the views which the Christian Religion gives of these relations; and also of their firm resolution faithfully to perform all the duties resulting from these relations.

[ii.] That the LORD'S SUPPER is often celebrated in all Christian countries is a fact that cannot be questioned, neither can it be questioned that Christians consider this rite to be essentially connected with the profession of their religion. Our fathers entertained the same opinion of its importance, and their fathers viewed it in the same light. But what claims and deserves particular notice with reference to this institution is that by the common consent of Christians now living, and of all in former ages of whose opinion we have any knowledge, the importance of the Lord's Supper arises from its being a commemoration of the life, sufferings, death, and resurrection, and second coming of the Founder of their religion, and from its having been expressly enjoined to all his disciples by his dying request, with a view to perpetuate the memory and demonstrate the truth of these events.

[iii.] The stated observance of THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK as a sacred festival in honour of Christ's resurrection from the dead,—on which day Christians abstain from all secular labours and affairs, and hold solemn assemblies for the public worship of God,—preserves that grand event from falling into oblivion.

Now, as these monuments perpetuate the memory, so they demonstrate the truth of the facts contained in the Gospel history beyond

all reasonable contradiction; because, unless the events of which the Christian rites are commemorations had really existed, it is impossible to conceive how those rites could have come into general use. For, if Jesus Christ neither lived, nor taught, nor wrought miracles, nor died, nor rose again from the dead, it is altogether incredible that so many men, in countries so widely distant, should have conspired together to perpetuate such a series of falsehoods, by commencing the observation of the institutions of Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the Lord's Day; and it is equally incredible that, by continuing to observe them, they should have imposed those falsehoods on posterity.[1]

IV. Lastly, THE WONDERFUL ESTABLISHMENT AND PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY IS A MOST CONVINCING PROOF OF THE ENTIRE CREDIBILITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, AND OF THE RELIGION WHICH IT ESTABLISHES.

Before the second century was completed, the Christian doctrine was propagated through the whole Roman empire, which then comprised almost the whole known world. It prevailed without the assistance of any temporal power. "Destitute of all human advantages, protected by no authority, assisted by no art, not recommended by the reputation of its author, not enforced by eloquence in its advocates, the word of God grew mightily and prevailed. We behold twelve men, poor, artless, and uneducated, triumphing over the fiercest and most determined opposition, over the tyranny of the magistrate and the subtleties of the philosopher, over the prejudices of the Gentile and the bigotry of the Jew." In progress of time the church became divided by heretics, as well as exposed to a series of the most sanguinary persecutions; yet still the truths she professed continued to spread, in defiance of all these impediments. And notwithstanding that those truths are repugnant to every bad passion of the human heart, and require, from those who profess them, the most exalted piety, together with the strictest possible regard to every civil, moral, and relative duty, as well as the purest and most diffusive benevolence, — still Christianity has continued to spread (as its founder had predicted) in every part of the known world, and, at the present day, is embraced and confessed by a tenth part of the human race.[2]

In considering these direct evidences of the credibility of the writers of the New Testament, it is of importance to observe, that there is no opposite testimony to contradict the positive credible testimony of the apostles, evangelists, and multitudes of others, to the history and miracles of Jesus.

Now is it probable, or even possible, that so many characteristic marks of truth as we have mentioned, derived from such various quarters, should all so exactly coincide in favour of a false story? Is not the supposition of the truth of a history thus accredited much more natural, more consonant to general observation and experience, to the laws of evidence, and of the human mind, than is the supposition of its falsity? A belief in the Christian Scriptures is, indeed, a belief in the reality of past miracles, to confirm a religion worthy of God and useful to man. Such a belief implies no absurdity, or contradiction to any truth or any fact. But by rejecting the Gospel, persons are compelled to maintain, in opposition to positive credible testimony, that extensive important events have taken place without an adequate cause. They must maintain the reality of miracles, greater than Christians believe, and which accord neither with the nature of God, nor the condition of man, but which involve absurdities, contradictions, and impossibilities.

To explain the most wonderful and extraordinary appearances in the natural world, philosophers without hesitation admit a cause which accounts for them clearly, and with the fewest difficulties; especially when every other supposition ne-

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[1] Macknight's Harmony, vol. i. prelim. obs. viii. and his Credibility of the Gospel History, pp. 555—563.

[2] The difficulties, which Christianity had to encounter at its first propagation, are considered in the Appendix, No. V. *infrà.*

cessarily leads to absurdities and contradictions. Upon what rational ground, then, can the truth of the Gospel history be doubted? And its truth establishes the divine authority of Jesus and his religion.

The full force of the arguments, which we have brought together to prove the truth of the Christian Scriptures, would be more obvious and impressive, if we were to compare the New Testament with other sacred writings, or with accounts of other persons who have been represented as divine messengers. Confucius, the writer of the Chinese canonical books, ingenuously acknowledges, that his doctrine was not his own, but taken from legislators who lived centuries before him. The ancient sacred code of the Hindoos, the Koran of Mohammed, the lives of Pythagoras, of Proclus, and of Apollonius of Tyana, and the Popish legends, all bear many stamps of fiction. We shall instance in Philostratus's life of Apollonius, for the following reasons: Hierocles, an ancient opponent of Christianity, has drawn a parallel between him and Jesus, and preferred Apollonius.[1] Eunapius, the biographer of several ancient philosophers, imagined Apollonius to be a kind of middle being between the gods and men; on which account he thought that "*the sojourning of God amongst mankind*" would have been a more proper title for Philostratus's history than that which it now bears. In modern times, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, and Mr. Blount, have taken the pains of making favourable comments upon Apollonius's history.

Philostratus's account is the only one that we have of Apollonius, who lived upwards of *one hundred* years BEFORE him. He tells us, that he took his narrative partly from common report, and partly from memoirs of Apollonius, said to have been written by one Damis, his companion. Some other person having shown these memoirs to Julia the wife of Severus, she gave them to Philostratus. Before this time they were not known to the world. Philostratus endeavoured to gain the favour of Julia, and of Antoninus Caracalla, who were both great admirers of the marvellous. The latter was so prejudiced in favour of Apollonius, that he paid him the honours which Pagans thought due to heroes. Philostratus, to gratify this humour, when his subject required it, added all the ornament he could, and made quite a romance of it. The narrative shows that he was fond of displaying his parts and genius. It contains laboured discussions of trifling questions; such as, which is the most ancient, the earth or the trees? which composes to sleep best, water or wine? Impertinent, ridiculous, and absurd relations are often introduced in it. For example, of beasts with a human head and a lion's body; of women half white and half black; of wool growing like corn out of the earth; of countries abounding with phœnixes, griffins, and dragons. In the description of his miracles, he unwarily mentions his cure of a dropsy to have been effected by prescribing abstinence to the patient.—Though Apollonius be made to tell Damis, that he understood all languages without learning them, yet in India, when he came before King Phraortes, he wanted an interpreter. In an account of his raising a young lady seemingly dead, at Rome, he mentions that it was still a secret, whether there were some remaining sparks of life; besides this, the miracle was unknown to any who lived at that time. The history tells us, that Apollonius appeared after his death to Aurelian, when he besieged Tyana; of which we have no other proof than the testimony of this romance writer. Apollonius is represented as manifesting the greatest vanity, and pretending to universal knowledge. He taught the doctrine of transmigration. He said, "It was wise to speak well of all the gods, especially at Athens, where altars of unknown demons were erected." He attempted to deify a lion. Three instances are given of his pretended prophetic spirit. Two of them evidently imply nothing superior to human knowledge. The third, that Nerva should one day be emperor, one is not surprised at, when the feigned prophet was, by flattery and advice, actually encouraging him, at that time, to a revolt; and what totally destroys the authority of the prediction is, that he denied it before Domitian. "His wonder-working faculty he pretends to have fetched from the East Indies; yet the account which he has given of those parts is so grossly fabulous, that that alone convicts him of imposture."[2]

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[1] Lard. Heath. Test. chap. xxxix. sect. 4. § 7.

[2] Lard. Heath. Test. chap. xxxix. sect. 5, 6. and append. to chap. xxxix. near the end.—Bp. Douglas's Criterion, pp. 55. *et seq.*—Houtteville's Diss. on the Life of Apollonius.—Paley's Evid. vol. ii. part 2. chap. 6. sect. 41. p 180.

These instances will suffice to manifest the striking contrast that subsists between the memoirs of Apollonius and those which we have of Jesus. Genuine marks of truth distinguish the narratives of the evangelists, while characters of fiction abound in the history written by Philostratus.

Such are the evidences, both external and internal, direct and collateral, for the Genuineness and Authenticity of the New Testament; and when their number, variety, and the extraordinary nature of many of them are impartially considered, it is impossible not to come to this convincing conclusion, that the SCRIPTURES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ARE GENUINE AND AUTHENTIC, AND WERE ACTUALLY WRITTEN BY THE PERSONS WHOSE NAMES THEY BEAR, AND THAT THEY DID APPEAR IN THE TIMES TO WHICH THEY REFER.

We shall conclude this section with the concessions of three writers concerning the Christian records, whose sentiments will not be suspected to have arisen from an unreasonable partiality in favour of them.

Mr. HOBBES acknowledges, that "the writings of the New Testament are as ancient as the times of the apostles; and that they were written by persons who lived in those times, some of whom *saw* the things which they relate. And though he insinuates that the copies of the Scriptures were but few, and in the first ages in the hands of the ecclesiastics only, yet he adds, that he sees no reason to doubt, but that the books of the New Testament, as we have them, are the *true* registers of those things which were *done* and *said* by the prophets and apostles."[1] He says, also, "That he is persuaded the ecclesiastics did not falsify the Scriptures; because if they had had an intention so to do, they would surely have made them more favourable to their power over Christian princes, and civil sovereignty than they are."[2]

Mr. CHUBB left the following sentiments: — "That there was such a person as Jesus Christ, and that he, in the main, *did and taught* as is recorded of him, appears probable, because it is improbable that Christianity should take place in the way and to the degree that it did (or at least that we are told it did), supposing the history of Christ's life and ministry to be a fiction." He adds, that, "if such power attended Jesus Christ in the exercise of his ministry as the history sets forth, then, seeing his ministry, and the power that attended it, seems at least in general to have terminated in the public good, it is more likely that GOD was the primary agent in the exercise of that power, than any other invisible being. And then it is probable that Jesus Christ, upon whose will the immediate exercise of that power depended, would not use that power to impose upon and mislead mankind to their hurt; seeing that power appears to have been well directed and applied in other respects, and seeing he was accountable to his Principal for the abuse of it." He adds, "From these premises, or from this general view of the case, I think this conclusion follows, viz. it is probable Christ's mission was divine;

[1] Leviathan, p. 204.—Leland's View of Deistical Writ, vol. i. p. 58. let. iii.
[2] Leviathan, p. 203.—Leland, ib. let. v. p. 104.

at least it so appears to me, from the light or information I have received concerning it."[1]

Lord BOLINGBROKE grants, that "Christianity has all the proofs which the manner in which it was revealed, and the nature of it, allowed it to have."[2] He further acknowledges, that "it is out of dispute that we have in our hands the Gospels of Matthew and John, who give themselves out for *eye* and *ear witnesses* of all that Christ *did* and *taught*. That two channels were as sufficient as four to convey those doctrines to the world, and to preserve them in their original purity. The manner, too, in which these evangelists recorded them, was much better adapted to this purpose than that of Plato, or even of Xenophon, to preserve the doctrines of Socrates. The evangelists did not content themselves with giving a general account of the doctrines of Jesus Christ in their own words, nor presume in feigned dialogues to make him deliver their opinions in his own name, and as his own doctrines. They recorded his doctrines in the very words in which he taught them, and they were careful to mention the several occasions on which he delivered them to his disciples or others. If, therefore, Plato and Xenophon tell us with a good degree of certainty what Socrates taught, the two evangelists seem to tell us with much more what the Saviour taught, and commanded them to teach."[3]

What but the irresistible force of truth could have extorted such concessions from men of learning and ability, who have written several things to depreciate the Christian religion, and the Divine authority of its Author?

From the preceding observations, it is evident that we have all the evidence that can be *reasonably* desired in favour of the credibility of the Scripture History, and particularly of what the evangelical historians relate concerning Jesus Christ. It is manifest that they were every way qualified to give an account of the transactions which they have recorded; they had no design to impose on mankind; they could have no inducement whatever to attempt an imposture, but every imaginable inducement to the contrary; nor could they possibly have succeeded, if they had made the attempt.

SECT. II.

TESTIMONIES TO THE CREDIBILITY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS FROM CIVIL HISTORY.

THE evidences for the credibility of the Old and New Testaments, which have been stated in the preceding section, have been drawn principally from an examination of those books compared with facts that have existed, and many of which continue to exist to the present day. We might safely rest the credibility of the Scriptures upon

[1] Chubb's Posthumous Works, vol. ii. pp. 41—43.; compared with pp. 394—396.—Leland, ib. letter xii. pp. 338—339.

[2] Works, vol. v. p. 91. 4to. edit.

[3] Bolingbroke's Works, vol. iv. ess. 4. sect. 18. p. 390.

those evidences; but there is an additional testimony to their credibility and truth as well as to their genuineness, which is afforded by *their agreement with civil history*, and which is too valuable to be passed in a cursory manner.

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§ 1. *Testimonies from Civil History to the Credibility of the Old Testament.*

The Scripture History agrees, in a surprising manner, with the most authentic records that remain of the events, customs, and manners of the countries and ages to which it stands related. The rise and fall of empires, the revolutions that have taken place in the world, and the grand outlines of chronology, as mentioned or referred to in the Scriptures, are coincident with those stated by the most ancient writers that are extant; while the palpable errors in these respects, which are detected in the apocryphal books, constitute one of the most decisive reasons for rejecting them as spurious. The history of the Bible is of far greater antiquity than any other records extant in the world; and it is remarkable that, in numerous instances, it shows the real origin of those absurd fables which disgrace and invalidate all other histories of those remote times; which is no feeble proof that it was derived from some surer source than human tradition. The facts recorded in the Old Testament cannot be disproved; but, on the contrary, they are confirmed by the traditionary accounts of almost all nations. Mr. Hume, indeed, affirmed that the Pentateuch was "wrote [written] in all probability long after the facts it relates." That this book was written long after some of the facts which it relates is not denied; but that it was written long after *all* or even most of those facts, there is (as we have already shown) no reason to believe. If, as Dr. Campbell forcibly remarked (and Mr. Hume neither did nor could refute the remark), this writer meant to signify by the expression quoted, that this was in all probability the case, why did he not produce the grounds on which such probability is founded? Shall a bold assertion pass for argument? or can it be expected that any one should consider reasons, which are only in general supposed, but not specified?

Mr. Hume added that the Pentateuch was "corroborated by no *concurring* testimony." To which we may reply, that it is as little invalidated by any *contradicting* testimony; and both for this plain reason, because there is no human composition that can be compared with this in respect of antiquity. It were absurd to require that the truth of Moses's history should be attested by heathen writers of the same or nearly the same antiquity with himself; since we know that those who affected to fix upon other nations the name of barbarians, were in his time, and for several centuries afterwards, themselves barbarians. But though the Pentateuch is not corroborated by the concurrent testimonies of any coëval histories, because if such histories were ever extant, they have long since perished, yet it is not on that account destitute of collateral evidence. On the contrary, its

authority is legible in the few fragments that remain of the earliest writers; and subsequent historians have fully confirmed it by the accounts which they give, though evidently mixed with depravation, of the history of the Jews, and of the legislation of Moses; as will appear from the following instances, selected out of a greater number which have been pointed out, and treated at length by various learned men.

I. Testimonies to the Mosaic Account of the Creation of the World.

1. The heathens had a tradition among them concerning the *Primeval Chaos whence the World arose*, and the production of all things by the efficiency of a supreme mind, which bears so close a resemblance to the Mosaic account of the creation, as proves that they all originated from one common source: while the striking contrast between the unadorned simplicity of the one, and the allegorical turgidity of the others, accurately distinguishes the inspired narrative from the distorted tradition. This remark applies particularly to the Chaldæan, Egyptian, Phœnician, Hindoo, Chinese, Etruscan, Gothic, Greek, and American Cosmogonies.[1]

2. One of the most striking collateral confirmations of the Mosaic history of the creation, is the general adoption of the division of time into *weeks*, which extends from the Christian states of Europe to the remote shores of Hindostan, and has equally prevailed among the Hebrews, the Egyptians, Chinese, Greeks, Romans, and northern barbarians; —nations, some of whom had little or no intercourse with others, and were not even known by name to the Hebrews. It is to be observed, that there is a great difference between the concurrence of nations in the division of time into *weeks*, and their concurrence in the other periodical divisions into *years*, *months*, and *days*. These divisions arise from such natural causes as are everywhere obvious, viz. the annual and diurnal revolutions of the sun, and the revolution of the moon. The division into *weeks*, on the contrary, seems perfectly arbitrary: consequently its prevailing in distant countries, and among nations which had no communication with one another, affords a strong presumption that it must have been derived from some remote tradition (as that of the creation), which was never totally obliterated from the memory of the Gentiles, and which tradition has been older than the dispersion of mankind into different regions. It is easy to conceive, that the practice, in rude and barbarous ages, might remain through habit, when the tradition on which it was founded was entirely lost: it is easy to conceive, that, afterwards, people addicted to idolatry, or who, like the Egyptians, had become proficients in astronomy, should assign to the different days of the week the names of their deities or of their planets.[2]

3. Even the Mosaic method of reckoning by nights instead of days has prevailed in more than one nation. Thus, the polished Athenians computed the space of a day from sun-set to sun-set[3]; and from a similar custom of our Gothic ancestors, during their abode in the forests of Germany, words expressive of such a mode of computing time have been derived into our own language.[4] The same custom also prevailed among the Celtic nations.[5]

II. Of the Formation of Man in the Moral Image of God, and his being vested with dominion over other animals, similar tradi-

[1] See an account of these various Cosmogonies in Mr. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, vol. i. pp. 17—40. The Greek and Latin Cosmogonies are particularly considered in Edwards on the Truth and Authority of the Scriptures, vol. i. pp. 88—102. The testimonies of profane writers to the truth of the principal facts related in the Scriptures are adduced and fully considered by Dr. Collyer in his "Lectures on Scripture Facts." 8vo. 2nd edit. London, 1809. The subjects, noticed in this section, particularly the Creation and the Deluge, are likewise copiously treated of in the notes to Grotius, De Veritate Rel. Christ. lib. i. c. 16.

[2] Dr. Campbell's Dissertation on Miracles, p. 219. note.

[3] Aulus Gellius, Noctes Atticæ, lib. iii. c. 2.

[4] Tacitus, de Mor. Ger. c. 11. The expressions of *fortnight*, and *se'nnight*, for fourteen nights and seven nights, are still in use among us in England.

[5] Cæsar, de Bell. Gall. lib. vi. c. 18.

tionary vestiges remain in the widely diffused notion, that mankind formerly lived in complete happiness and unstained innocence; that spring reigned perpetually, and that the earth spontaneously gave her increase.

This was the origin of the fabled golden age, so exquisitely described by the classic poets, and which may also be distinctly traced in the legends of our Scythian forefathers, and in the age of perfection of the Hindoos; and in the classical story of the garden of the Hesperides, we may equally discover an evident tradition of the Mosaical paradise and of the promised Saviour, who should bruise the head of the infernal Dragon. Nor is it improbable that, from the holiness of the garden of Eden, the pagans borrowed their ancient custom of consecrating groves to the worship of their various deities.[1]

III. The Fall of Man and the Introduction of Sin into the World are related in the third chapter of the book of Genesis. It has been the fashion with minute philosophers and philosophising divines to endeavour to explain away the reality of the fall, and to resolve it all into allegory, apologue, or moral fable; but the whole scheme of redemption by Christ is founded upon it, and must stand or fall with it; a figurative fall requiring only a figurative redemption. Even Lord Bolingbroke (than whom Revelation never had a more subtle opposer) justly rejected the allegorical interpretation. "*It* CANNOT," he said, "*be admitted by Christians;* for, if it was, what would become of that famous text [that the seed of the woman should crush the serpent's head, Gen. iii. 15.], whereon the doctrine of our redemption is founded?"[2]

Indeed the Mosaic account, from its simplicity and consonance with the whole tenor of the Scriptures, was evidently designed to represent a real transaction[3]; and it has been received as such by the writers of the Old and New Testaments, who certainly were more competent to decide than men who have lived several thousands of years after the transaction, and whose bold contradictions of the best attested matters of fact render their unsupported assertions of no effect. Modern opposers of revelation have ridiculed the account of the fall as a myth or fable. But nothing is easier than ridicule to men who pay no regard to piety, equity, and common decency. Whatever they may *assert* (and let it be remembered that assertions without proof are not facts), and however they may attempt to explain away the Mosaic account of the fall, or attempt to prove it false, yet the evidently ruined condition of the human race would still remain as an UNDENIABLE FACT. And the narrative of the fall is confirmed both by natural and civil history. Thus, it agrees in an eminent manner both with the obvious facts of labour, sorrow, pain, and death, and also with what we see and feel every day, and with all our philosophical inquiries into the frame of the human mind, the nature of social life, and the origin of evil. The several powers of the little world within a man's own breast are at variance with one another, as well as those of the great world; and we are utterly unable to give a complete solution of the origin of the evils which

[1] Faber's Hor. Mos. vol. i. pp. 41—50. Edwards on Scripture, vol. i. pp. 103—106.
[2] Bolingbroke's Works, vol. v. p. 372. 8vo. edit.
[3] Dr. Hales's Chronology, vol. ii. book i. p. 10.

flow from these discords and from the jarring elements of the natural world. But the Mosaic narrative accounts for all these otherwise unaccountable phenomena, and is corroborated by various traditions, more or less agreeable to it.

1. "The commencement of this moral taint is ascribed by the author of the Pentateuch to the DISOBEDIENCE OF OUR FIRST PARENTS.

"An evil spirit, the origination of whose malignity itself is a mystery which can never be fathomed, speaking through the organs of a serpent, tempted them to transgress the command of God by tasting the forbidden fruit of a distinctly specified tree. The penalty of their rebellion was death." Though Moses gives no account of Satan or the tempter, yet we learn from other passages of Scripture, that he was first made like other celestial spirits, perfect in his kind and happy in his condition; but that, through pride or ambition, falling into a crime (the circumstances of which are unknown to us), he thence fell into misery, and, together with his accomplices, was banished from the regions of bliss. Of this fall of wicked angels, the ancients had some notion, as is manifest from their tradition of the Titans and Giants invading heaven, fighting against Jupiter, and attempting to depose him from his throne, for which reason he cast them headlong into hell, where they are tormented with incessant fire. And therefore Empedocles, in some verses cited by Plutarch, makes mention of the fate of some demons, who for their rebellion were, from the summit of heaven, plunged into the bottom of the great abyss, there to be punished as they deserved.[1]

The fictions of Indian mythology, with regard to contending powers and their subordinate ministers, both benevolent and malignant, are erected on the same basis of truth.

2. The INTRODUCTION OF PHYSICAL EVIL into the world,

By the disobedience of our first mother Eve, is plainly alluded to by the well-known heathen legend of Pandora; who being led by a fatal curiosity to open a casket that had been given her by Jupiter, out of it flew all the evil into the world, and she became the original cause of all the miserable occurrences that befall mankind. Hope alone, — the hope in a promised and long-remembered deliverer, — remaining at the bottom of the casket.

3. ORIGINAL SIN,—the early corruption and depravation of man's nature in consequence of our first parents' transgression, is a subject of complaint among the ancient heathen moralists, philosophers, and poets.

Thus, Pythagoras termed it the *fatal companion, the noxious strife that lurks within us, and which was born along with us;* — Sopater called it, *the sin that is born with mankind;* — Plato, *natural wickedness;* — Aristotle, *the natural repugnancy of man's temper to reason:* and all the Greek and Roman philosophers, especially the Stoics and Platonists, complain of the depraved and degenerate condition of mankind, of their propensity to every thing that is evil, and of their aversion from every thing that is good. Thus, Cicero lamented that *men are brought into life by nature as a step-mother, with a naked, frail, and infirm body, and with a soul prone to divers lusts.* Seneca, one of the best of the Roman philosophers, observes, *We are born in such a condition, that we are not subject to fewer disorders of the mind than of the body;* — that *The seeds of all the vices are in all men, though they do not break out in every one;* — and that *To confess them is the beginning of our cure.* And Hierocles called this universal moral taint, *The domestic evil of mankind.* Even some of the sprightliest poets bear their testimony to the same fact. Propertius could say, *Every body has a vice to which he is inclined by nature.* Horace declared that *No man is born free from vices,* and that *He is the best man who is oppressed with the least;* that *Mankind rush into wickedness, and always desire what is forbidden;* that *Youth has the softness of wax to receive vicious impressions, and the hardness of*

[1] Huet, Quæstiones Alnetanæ, lib. 2. Edwards on Scripture, vol. i. pp. 106, 107.

rock to resist virtuous admonitions; and, in short, that *We are mad enough to attack heaven itself*, and that *Our repeated crimes do not suffer the God of Heaven to lay aside his wrathful thunderbolts*. And Juvenal has furnished a striking corroboration to the statement of Paul of Tarsus concerning the *carnal mind* (Rom. vii. 18—23.), when he says that *Nature, unchangeably fixed, runs back to wickedness*, as bodies to their centre.

Further, there is reason to suppose, that the ancient Celtic Druids expressly taught the defection of the human soul from a state of original rectitude; the invariable belief of the Brahmins, in Hindostan, is, that man is a fallen creature; and it is well known that a similar opinion was inculcated by the classical mythologists, and especially by Hesiod, in their descriptions of the gradual corruption of the human race, during the period subsequent to the golden age. Catullus represents the unhallowed period, when justice was put to flight, and brothers imbrued their hands in fraternal blood, while incest and sacrilege alienated the mind of God from man; and Tacitus marks out the progress of depravity, from a period free from offence and punishment, to a flagitious and abandoned wickedness, devoid even of fear. Thus, "Providence seems to have drawn evidence of the guilt of men from their own confessions, and to have preserved their testimony for the conviction of subsequent times."[1]

4. The FORM ASSUMED BY THE TEMPTER,

When he seduced our first parents, has been handed down in the traditions of most ancient nations, particularly the Persians, Hindoos, Greeks, the Egyptians, and the Scythians or Goths; and though animals of the serpent tribe were worshipped by *some* of the Pagans, as the Egyptians, Phœnicians, and Greeks, as symbols of the good demon[2], yet they were more generally regarded as types or figures of the evil principle.[3]

There is nothing, in which the traditions and opinions of the heathens bear stronger testimony to the doctrines of Scripture, than the conviction which prevailed, of the necessity of an ATONEMENT FOR SIN, AND OF THE INTERVENTION OF A DIVINE MEDIATOR, and the universal practice of devoting piacular victims, which has at one period or other equally prevailed in every quarter of the globe.

It has been alike adopted by the most barbarous, and by the most refined nations. "The rude idolater of the recently discovered hemisphere, and the polished votary of polytheism, equally concur in the belief that without shedding of blood there can be no remission of sins. Nor was the life of the brute creation always deemed sufficient to remove the taint of guilt and to avert the wrath of heaven. The death of a nobler victim was frequently required; and the altars of paganism were bedewed with torrents of human blood." Thus, the Canaanites caused their first-born to pass through the fire, in order to appease the anger of their false deities; and one of the kings of Moab is said to have offered up his eldest son as a burnt-offering, when in danger from the superior power of the Edomites.[4] "Nor was the belief that the gods were rendered propitious by this peculiar mode of sacrifice confined to the nations which were more immediately contiguous to the territories

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[1] Faber, vol. i. pp. 65—71.; Edwards, vol. i. pp. 108—110.; Bp. Gray's Connection between Sacred and Profane Literature, vol. i. pp. 163—165.; Fletcher's Appeal to Matter of Fact, pp. 143—147.; Cormack's Inquiry into the Doctrine of Original Sin, pp. 24—26.; in which works the proofs of the *facts* above stated are given in detail.

[2] This is a manifest relic of the tempter's assuming the form of a goodly serpent, and appearing like a good demon, or angel of light, when he tempted Eve.

[3] Faber, vol. i. pp. 71—76. Edwards, vol. i. pp. 111—114. Gray, vol. i. pp. 161, 162. The fullest view of this subject will be found in the Rev. J. B. Deane's elaborate treatise, intitled "The Worship of the Serpent traced throughout the World, and its Traditions referred to the Events in Paradise; proving the Temptation and Fall of Man by the Instrumentality of a Serpent Tempter. London, 1830." 8vo.

[4] 2 Kings iii. 27. Other instances of human sacrifices may be seen in p 5. *suprà*, note 4.

of Israel. We learn from Homer, that a whole hecatomb of firstling lambs was no uncommon offering among his countrymen[1]; and the ancient Goths having laid it down as a principle, that the effusion of the blood of animals appeased the anger of the gods, and that their justice turned aside upon the victims those strokes which were destined for men[2], soon proceeded to greater lengths, and adopted the horrid practice of devoting human victims. In honour of the mystical number three, a number deemed particularly dear to heaven, every ninth month witnessed the groans and dying struggles of nine unfortunate victims. The fatal blow being struck, the lifeless bodies were consumed in the sacred fire which was kept perpetually burning; while the blood, in singular conformity with the Levitical ordinances, was sprinkled, partly upon the surrounding multitude, partly upon the trees of the hallowed grove, and partly upon the images of their idols.[3] Even the remote inhabitants of America retained similar customs, and for similar reasons. It is observed by Acosta, that, in cases of sickness, it was usual for a Peruvian to sacrifice his son to Virachoca, beseeching him to spare his life, and to be satisfied with the blood of his child.[4]

"Whence, then," we may ask with the learned author to whose researches this section is so deeply indebted: "Whence, then, could originate this universal practice of devoting the first-born, either of man or beast, and of offering it up as a burnt-offering? Whence, but from a deep and ancient consciousness of moral depravation? Whence, but from some perverted tradition, respecting the true sacrifice to be once offered for the sins of all mankind? In the oblation of the first-born, originally instituted by God himself, and faithfully adhered to both by Jew and Gentile, we behold the death of him, who was the first-born of his virgin-mother, accurately though obscurely exhibited. And in the constant use of fire, the invariable scriptural emblem of wrath and jealousy, we view the indignation of that God, who is a consuming fire, averted from our guilty race, and poured out upon the immaculate head of our great Intercessor. Had a consciousness of purity reigned in the bosoms of the ancient idolaters, it does not appear, why they should have had more reason to dread the vengeance of the Deity, than to expect and to claim his favour; yet that such a dread did universally prevail, is too well known to require the formality of a laboured demonstration."[5]

IV. The Translation of Enoch

May be traced in the Grecian fables of the translation of their heroes or demigods, and particularly of Hesperus and Astrea (among the ancient Greeks), who are fabled to have ascended to heaven alive, and to have been turned into stars and celestial signs; of Dhruva among the Hindoos; of Buddha among the Ceylonese, and of Xaca (another name for Buddha) among the Calmucks of Siberia.[6]

V. The Longevity of the Antediluvian Inhabitants, mentioned by Moses, is confirmed by various heathen writers.

"All," says Josephus, "who have committed to writing the antiquities either of the Greeks or Barbarians, attest this longevity of the men before the flood." And he immediately subjoins,—"Manetho, who wrote an account of the Egyptians, Berosus, who compiled [an account of] the affairs of Chaldæa, and Mochus, and

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[1] Iliad, lib. iv. ver. 202. [2] Mallet's North. Antiq. vol. i. c. 7.
[3] Mallet's North. Antiq. vol. i. c. 7.—Olai Magni Hist. lib. iii. c. 7.
[4] Acost. apud Purch. Pilgr. book ix. c. 11. p. 885.
[5] Faber's Hor. Mos. vol. i. pp. 64, 65.
[6] Faber, vol. i. pp. 89—91. Edwards, vol. i. p. 117.

Hestiæus, and with them Hieronymus the Egyptian, who had treated of the affairs of Egypt, agree with me in this. Also Hesiod, and Hecatæus, and Hellanicus, and Acusilaus, and Ephorus, and Nicolaus, relate that the ancients lived a thousand years."[1] Similar traditions of the longevity of men, in former ages, are still to be found among the Burmans of the further Indian Peninsula, and also among the Chinese.[2]

VI. The Mosaic account of MEN OF A GIGANTIC STATURE, who were inured to deeds of lawless violence and rapine,

Is confirmed by the Greek and Latin poets, who relate that there were giants in the first ages of the world, and also by the Greek and Latin historians, particularly by Pausanias and Philostratus among the Greeks, and Pliny among the Romans, who have recorded that, on opening some sepulchres, the bodies of men were found to be much larger in old times. Josephus also speaks of bones seen in his days, of a magnitude almost exceeding credibility.[3] These testimonies of historians of former ages to the generally gigantic stature of men, furnish a satisfactory answer to the petty cavils of those who object to the credibility of Moses, from his mentioning the gigantic size of Og's bedstead. (Deut. iii. 11.) But men of very large size are occasionally seen even in our days. Some allowance may also be made for royal vanity; as Alexander the Great ordered his soldiers to enlarge the size of their beds that they might give to the Indians, in succeeding ages, a great idea of the prodigious stature of the Macedonian soldiers.[4]

VII. No part of the Mosaic history has been more ridiculed by the opposers of revelation, than the narrative of the DELUGE; though NO fact that ever occurred in the world is so well attested by civil history. Thus,

1. The *Paucity of Mankind,* and the vast tracts of uninhabited land, which are mentioned in the accounts of the first ages, show that mankind are sprung lately from a small stock, and even suit the time assigned by Moses before the flood. To which we may add, that the great number of small kingdoms and petty states, in the first ages, concur to the same purpose.

"Most eminent nations," it has been well observed, "like great families, have at all times been fond of extolling up their pedigree, and carrying it as high as possible; and, where no marks remain of the successive alterations in their state, are apt to imagine that it has been always the same. Hence the many foolish pretences

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[1] Josephus, Antiq. Jud. lib. i. c. 3. (al. 4.) On the authors above cited by Josephus, it has been well remarked that "these men either were in possession of traditions relating to this fact, or that they borrowed them from Moses; and in either case our purpose is answered. For, if they received them from prevalent traditions, it will be granted that these traditions had originally some foundation in fact; and they correspond with the sacred history. But if they borrowed them from Moses, two points are gained on our part. It is proved that such a man as Moses did really exist; that his writings were then extant; that they were in substance what they now are; and that they bear an antiquity more remote than these, which are allowed to be the most ancient of the heathen writers. It is proved further, that his history was highly esteemed, and that it was supposed by these writers to contain facts. Whether they drew from Moses or from tradition; and whether their testimony sprang from this narration or from any other source; either way, the Mosaic account of these early ages is corroborated by the oldest fragments of antiquity." Collyer's Lectures on Scripture Facts, p. 104.

[2] Faber, vol. i. pp. 92, 93.

[3] The passages from the historians above mentioned are given at length in Grotius de Veritate, lib. i. c. 16.

[4] Bp. Watson's Apology in answer to Paine, p. 34. "My philosophy," he adds, "teaches me to doubt of many things, but it does not teach me to reject every testimony which is opposite to experience. Had I been born in Shetland, I could, on proper testimony, have believed in the existence of the Lincolnshire ox, or the largest dray-horse in London, though the oxen and horses of Shetland had not been bigger than mastiffs." Ibid. p. 35.

among the ancients to their being aborigines of the countries they had inhabited time out of mind: hence they were led to make their several gods the founders of their government. They knew but very little of the world; and the tradition which they had of that little was so far mixed and corrupted with romance that it served only to confound them.[1] Upon the removal of this cloud by the more diligent and accurate inquiry of the moderns, we see ancient history beginning to clear up, the world puts on a very different face, and all parts of it appear conformable to each other, and to the late better known course of things; as is proved very clearly, in various instances, by a learned and ingenious writer.[2] — We find the marvellous in all the annals of those times, and more especially in the great point of their antiquity, exceedingly reduced[3], and our own plain accounts still more and more confirmed: whence we may be convinced that both the peopling and cultivation of the earth arose at first from a few low beginnings; that it very gradually spread itself from some one centre[4]; and that it has at all times proceeded by pretty near the same slow regular steps as it does at present."[5]

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[1] "The grounds of the uncertainty of ancient history may be seen in Stillingfleet, Origines Sacræ, book i. ch. 1. sect. 16. 18, &c. Compare Bryant's accurate account of it *passim*. Of the Egyptian in particular, see Shaw's Travels, pp. 417. 442. 4to. Compare Baker on History and Chronology Reflect. ch. 10 and 11. Shuckford's Connection, vol. ii. book viii. Winder's History of Knowledge, vol. ii. ch. 10. sect. 4. &c. Bp. Clayton's Remarks on the Origin of Hieroglyphics, p. 58. &c. Goguet, vol. iii. diss. iii. p. 269. That the Babylonish empire was not so old as has been pretended, see Le Clerc on Gen. x. Concerning the fabulous antiquity of the Chinese, see Conclusion of Mod. Hist. ii. p. 95. fol."

[2] See Bryant's Analysis of Ancient Mythology, *passim*.

[3] "Till men come to a scrutiny, they are very apt to imagine that a number is vastly greater than it is. I have often asked people to guess how many men there have been in a direct line between the present king of England [George II.] and Adam, meaning only one man in a generation; the king's father, grandfather, &c. The answer made upon a sudden conjecture, has always been, some thousands; whereas it is evident from a calculation, there have not been two hundred. For the space of time between Adam and Christ, let us take the genealogy of our Saviour, preserved by St. Luke, in which the names between Adam and Christ, exclusive of both, are but seventy-four. From the birth of Christ to the birth of the king, were sixteen hundred and eighty years. Let it be supposed, that in the list of the king's progenitors, every son was born when his father was twenty-five years old, which is as early as can be supposed, one with another. According to this supposition, there were four generations in every hundred years; *i.e.* in those sixteen hundred and eighty-three years, there were sixty-seven generations; which sixty-seven, added to the foregoing seventy-four, will make no more than a hundred and forty-one." Hallett on Heb. xi. 7. note a. p. 17. Comp. Goguet, vol. iii. diss. iii. pr. Bryant's Analysis, *passim*.

[4] "This has been observed by Isaac Casaubon in one respect, viz. in relation to language. 'Est enim verissimum,' says he, 'linguas cæteras eo manifestiora et magis expressa originis Hebraicæ vestigia servasse, et nunc servare, quo propius ab antiqua et prima hominum sede abfuerunt,' &c. A confirmation of it, in some other respects, may be had from the following *very remarkable* particular, as Hartley justly calls it (Observ. on Man, vol. ii. p. 113.): 'It appears from history, that the different nations of the world have had, cæteris paribus, more or less knowledge, civil and religious, in proportion as they were nearer to, or had more intimate communication with Egypt, Palestine, Chaldæa, and the other countries that were inhabited by the most eminent persons amongst the first descendants of Noah; and by those who are said in Scripture to have had particular revelations made to them by God: and that the first inhabitants of the extreme parts of the world, reckoning Palestine as the centre, were in general mere savages. Now all this is utterly inexplicable upon the footing of infidelity; of the exclusion of all divine communications. Why should not human nature be as sagacious, and make as many discoveries, civil and religious, at the Cape of Good Hope, or in America, as in Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Greece, or Rome? Nay, why should Palestine so far exceed them all, as it did confessedly? Allow the Scripture accounts, and all will be clear and easy. Mankind after the flood were first dispersed from the plains of Mesopotamia. Some of the chief heads of families settled there, in Palestine, and in Egypt. Palestine had afterwards extraordinary divine illuminations bestowed upon its inhabitants, the Israelites and Jews. Hence its inhabitants had the purest notions of God, and the wisest civil establishment. Next after them come the Egyptians and Chaldæans; who, not being removed from

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[5] Bp. Law's Theory of Religion, pp. 238—241. 8vo. 1820

Sir William Jones has shown that the traditions of the present heathen nations of Asia are not of more authority than the traditions of the ancient nations of Asia and Europe. "We find," he says, "no certain monument or even probable tradition of nations planted, empires and states raised, laws enacted, cities built, navigation improved, commerce encouraged, arts invented, or letters contrived, above twelve or at most fifteen or sixteen centuries before the birth of Christ." And it is a well-known *fact* that for the first thousand years of that period we have no history unmixed with fable, except that of the turbulent and variable, but eminently distinguished nation descended from Abraham. The Chinese do not pretend that any historical monument existed among them in the age of Confucius more ancient than eleven hundred years before the Christian epoch. And the researches of those who are most deeply skilled in the literature and antiquities of the Hindoos have shown that the dawn of *true* Indian history appears only three or four centuries before the Christian æra, the preceding ages being clouded by allegory or fable.[1]

2. The *late Invention and Progress of Arts and Sciences* also concur to confirm the Mosaic history of the antediluvians: for, as the Jewish legislator mentions little of their arts, so it appears from the late invention of these *after* the flood that those who were preserved from it were possessed but of few arts.

Since the history of past ages has been more narrowly examined, it has been proved that the ancients were far less knowing and expert than, by a superstitious reverence for every thing remote, we once were accustomed to suppose. Some of them, indeed, have described their knowledge in lofty strains, and perhaps for their times, and in comparison with some of their neighbours, it may have been considerable: and yet it is more than probable that such accounts are chiefly owing to their ignorance of the true state of mankind. This is particularly the case with the Egyptians, whose learning has been so much extolled. Though this country has been styled the Mother of Arts, as well as Mistress of Religion, and was, no doubt, as early polished as most countries; yet if we be allowed to judge of her improvement in other parts of science from that most important one, and that which in all reason should have been most cultivated, viz. that of *medicine*, of which she also claims the first invention, we shall not have much room to admire her highest advances. "It must evidently appear," says a learned writer, "that the Egyptians could have no such physicians in the days of Moses as Diodorus and Herodotus seem to suppose: it is much more probable that long after these times they were, like the Babylonians, entirely destitute of persons skilful in curing any diseases that might happen amongst them; and that the best method they could think of, after consulting their oracles, was, when any one was sick, to have as many persons to see and speak to him as possibly could; so that if any one who saw the sick person had had the like distemper, he might say what was proper to be done in that condition."[2]

The pretences which the Egyptians made to antiquity so much beyond the times recorded in the Scriptures, proceeded from their calculating by lunar years or months, or from their reckoning the dynasties of their kings in succession, which

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their first habitations, and living in fertile countries watered by the Nile, Tigris, and Euphrates, may be supposed to have preserved more both of the antediluvian and postdiluvian revelations; also to have had more leisure for invention, and more free communication with the Israelites and Jews than any other nations. Whereas those small parties which were driven farther and farther from each other into the extremities of heat and cold, entirely occupied in providing necessaries for themselves, and also cut off by rivers, mountains, or distance, from all communication with Palestine, Egypt, and Chaldæa, would lose much of their original stock, and have neither inclination nor ability to invent more.' Compare Bryant's Analysis, *passim*. Of the several arts, customs, religious rites and civil institutions which first arose in Asia, see Conclusion of Mod. Hist. p. 120. fol. Any one that fairly examines history will find those accounts more probable than that extraordinary supposition of Lord Bolingbroke, viz. that science may have come originally from west to east. Lord Bolingbroke's Works, vol. iv. p. 14."

[1] Sir W. Jones's Works, vol. iii. pp. 191. 145. 8vo. edit.

[2] Shuckford, Connect. book ix. p. 167. Bp. Law's Theory of Religion, p. 246.

were contemporary. For Herodotus[1] mentions twelve Egyptian kings reigning at one time. They had such different accounts, however, of chronology, that, as it is affirmed, some of them computed about thirteen thousand years more than others from the original of their dynasties to the time of Alexander the Great.[2] The solar year, in use among the Egyptians, who were most celebrated for astronomy, was so imperfect, that they said the sun had several times changed its course since the beginning of their dynasties; imputing the defect of their own computation to the sun's variation, or else affecting to speak something wonderful and extravagant. And Cassini has found the account of eclipses, at the beginning of Diogenes Laertius, to be false; which is a further confutation of the fabulous pretences of the Egyptians to antiquity. The earliest astronomical observations to be met with which were made in Egypt are those performed by the Greeks of Alexandria, less than three hundred years before Christ, as Dr. Halley has observed[3]: and since the recent discoveries in the Egyptian Hieroglyphics of our great archæologist, Dr. Young, and of MM. Letronne and Champollion in France, it has been ascertained that the celebrated zodiacs of Esné and Dendera, to which some modern antagonists of divine revelation had assigned an incalculable antiquity, are *posterior to the time of Jesus Christ*, as well as the edifices on the ceilings of which they were painted![4]

The pretensions of the Chaldæans to profound attainments in science have been shown to be equally unfounded. According to Berosus, they supposed the moon to be a luminous body, whence it is evident that they could have no great skill in astronomy: besides, they wanted instruments for making exact calculations. All that remains of their boasted astronomical discoveries is only seven eclipses of the moon; and even those are but very coarsely set down, the oldest not being more than seven hundred years before Christ: whence it is evident that they had made but little progress in this science. And though Callisthenes is *said* by Porphyry to have brought observations from Babylon to Greece upwards of nineteen hundred years older than Alexander, yet as the proper authors of those observations neither made any mention nor use of them, this circumstance renders his report justly suspected for a fable.[5] So little ground is there for us to depend upon the accounts of time and the vain boasts of antiquity which these nations have made.

The Greeks had their astronomy from Babylon[6]; and the Athenians had but three hundred and sixty days in their year in the time of Demetrius Phalereus[7]; yet Dr. Halley further observes, that the Greeks were the first practical astronomers, who endeavoured in earnest to make themselves masters of the science, and that Thales was the first who could predict an eclipse in Greece, not six hundred years before Christ, and that Hipparchus made the first catalogue of the fixed stars not above one hundred and fifty years before Christ.

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[1] Lib. ii. c. 151.

[2] Diodor. Sic. lib. i.

[3] Wotton on Ant. and Mod. Learning, ch. 23. Jenkin's Reasonableness of Christianity, vol. i. pp. 335—337.

[4] Cellérier, de l'Origine Authentique et Divine de l'Ancien Testament, pp. 100—104. On the planisphere or zodiac of Dendera, M. Champollion discovered an evidently Roman title, that of ATOKPTP, Αὐτοκράτωρ, or *emperor*, in phonetic hieroglyphics; which, most probably, may indicate Claudius or Nero, as both those sovereigns, in their medals struck in Egypt, are very often designated by that identical appellation. On prosecuting his researches still farther, M. Champollion read on the great edifice, in the ceiling of which that planisphere had been placed, the titles, names, and surnames of the emperors Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, and Domitian; and on the portico of Esné, the zodiac of which was reputed to be older than that of Dendera, by several ages, he read the imperial Roman names of Claudius and Antoninus Pius. Consequently these monuments, for which Volney and other infidel literati had claimed an incalculably remote antiquity, belong to that period when Egypt was under the domination of the Romans, and they cannot be dated earlier than the first or second century of the Christian æra. Greppo, Essai sur le Système Hiéroglyphique de M. Champollion, pp. 262, 263. Paris, 1829. See also Mr. Poole's article on Egypt, in the eighth volume of the Encyclopædia Britannica (eighth edition); and also his Horæ Ægyptiacæ; or, Chronology of ancient Egypt discovered from . . . . Hieroglyphical Records. London, 1851.

[5] Dr. Halley, in Wotton's Observations on Learning, ch. 23. Stanley, in his History of Philosophy (pp. 757, 758. Lond. 1753), has shown that Porphyry's account is intitled to little credit; since there is nothing extant in the Chaldæan astrology more ancient than the æra of Nabonassar, which begins only 747 years before Christ.

[6] Herodotus, lib. ii. c. 109.

[7] Pliny, Hist. Nat. lib. xxxiv. c. 6.

According to the well known observation of Varro[1], there was nothing that can deserve the name of history to be found among the Greeks before the Olympiads, which commenced only about twenty years before the building of Rome; and Plutarch informs us how little the tables of the Olympiads are to be relied on.[2] Whatever learning or knowledge of ancient times the Romans had, they borrowed it from the Greeks. For they were so little capable of transmitting their own affairs down to posterity with any exactness in point of time, that for many ages they had neither dials nor hour-glasses by which to measure their days and nights for common use; and for three hundred years they knew no such things as hours, or the like distinctions, but computed their time only from noon to noon.

The pretensions of the Chinese to antiquity appear equally vain, and upon the same grounds. They, too, understand little or nothing of astronomy. Indeed, they themselves confess that their antiquities are in great part fabulous, and they acknowledge that their most ancient books were in hieroglyphics, which were not expounded by any one who lived nearer than one thousand seven hundred years to the first author of them; that the numbers in computation are sometimes mistaken, or that months are put for years. But of what antiquity or authority soever their first writers were, there is little or no credit to be given to the books now remaining, since the general destruction of all ancient books by the Emperor Xi Hoam Ti. He lived only about two hundred years before Christ, and commanded, upon pain of death, all the monuments of antiquity to be destroyed relating either to history or philosophy, especially the books of Confucius; and killed many of their learned men: so that from his time they have only some fragments of old authors left. — The Chinese are a people vain enough to say any thing that may favour their pretences to antiquity, and love to magnify themselves to the Europeans, which makes them endeavour to have it believed that their antiquities are sufficiently entire, notwithstanding this destruction of their books. But the fact is well known to be otherwise[3]: — and, upon inspection, it was found that their instruments were useless; and that after all their boasted skill in astronomy, they were not able to make an exact calendar, and their tables of eclipses were so incorrect that they could scarcely foretell about what time that of the sun should happen.[4] In like manner, the boasted antiquity, claimed for the science and records of the Hindoos over those of Moses by some modern writers, has been fully exposed since scientific Europeans have become thoroughly acquainted with their language. "The Hindoos, perhaps the most anciently civilised people on the face of the earth, and who have least deviated from their originally established forms, have unfortunately no history. Among an infinite number of books of mystical theology and abstruse metaphysics, they do not possess a single volume that is capable of affording any distinct account of their origin, or of the various events that have occurred to their communities. Their Maha-Bharata, or pretended great history, is nothing more than a poem. The Pouranas are mere legends; on comparing which with the Greek and Latin authors, it is excessively difficult to establish a few slight coincidences of chronology, and even that is continually broken off and interrupted, and never goes back farther than the time of Alexander.[5] It is now clearly proved that their famous astronomical tables, from which it has been attempted to assign a prodigious antiquity to the Hindoos, have been calculated backwards[6]; and it has been lately ascertained that their Surya-Siddhanta, which they consider as their most ancient astronomical treatise, and pretend to have been revealed to their nation more than two millions of years ago, must have been composed within the seven

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[1] Censorinus, De Die Natali, c. 21. [2] Plutarch, in Numa, initio.

[3] Martinii Hist. Sin. — Le Compte's Memoir.

[4] Jenkin's Reasonableness of Christianity, vol. i. pp. 339—343.; and see also Winder's History of Knowledge, vol. ii. chapters x.—xx., where the facts above stated are confirmed by proofs. Additional testimonies to the late date and imperfect progress of knowledge among the Chinese may be seen in the facts and authorities collected by Bp. Law, in his Theory of Religion, pp. 243—245. note (z).

[5] Consult the elaborate memoir of Mr. Paterson, respecting the kings of Magadaha emperors of Hindostan, and upon the epochs of Vicramadityia and Salahanna, in the Calcutta Memoirs, vol. ix.

[6] See Expos. du Syst. du Monde, by Count Laplace, p. 330.

hundred and fifty years last past.[1] Their Vedas, or sacred books, judging from the calendars which are conjoined with them, and by which they are guided in their religious observances, and estimating the colures indicated in these calendars, may perhaps go back about three thousand two hundred years, which nearly coincides with the epoch of Moses.[2] Yet the Hindoos are not entirely ignorant of the revolutions which have affected the globe, as their theology has in some measure consecrated certain successive destructions which its surface has already undergone, and is still doomed to experience: and they only carry back the last of those which have already happened, about five thousand years[3]; besides which, one of these revolutions is described in terms nearly corresponding with the account given by Moses.[4] It is also very remarkable that the epoch at which they fix the commencement of the reigns of their first human sovereigns of the race of the sun and moon, is nearly the same at which the ancient authors of the west have placed the origin of the Assyrian monarchy, or about four thousand years ago."[5]

From all these particulars it is evident how little credit is to be given to the pretences which the several nations among the heathens have made to antiquity, without any ground from history, but upon uncertain calculations of astronomy, in which science they actually had but little or no skill.

3. The truth of the Mosaic history of the deluge is confirmed by the *Tradition* of it, which universally obtained. If such an event had ever happened, it is natural to expect that some traces of it will be found in the records of pagan nations as well as in those of Scripture. Indeed it is scarcely probable, not to say possible, that the knowledge of so great a calamity should be utterly lost to the rest of the world, and should be confined to the Jewish nation alone. We find, however, that this is by no means the case: a tradition of the deluge, in many respects accurately coinciding with the Mosaic account of it, has been preserved almost universally among the ancient nations.

[1] See the Memoirs, by Mr. Bentley, on the Antiquity of the Surya-Siddhanta, in the Calcutta Memoirs, vol. vi. p. 537. and the Memoir by the same author on the Astronomical Systems of the Hindoos, ibid. vol. ix. p. 195.

[2] See the Memoir by Mr. Colebrooke upon the Vedas, and particularly p. 493., in the Calcutta Memoirs, vol. viii.

[3] Voyage to India by M. le Gentil, i. 235. Bentley in the Calcutta Memoirs, vol. ix. p. 222. Paterson in ditto, ibid. p. 86.

[4] Sir William Jones says, "We may fix the time of Buddah, or the ninth great incarnation of Vishnu, in the year 1014 before the birth of Christ. The Cashmirians, who boast of his descent in their kingdom, assert that he appeared on earth about two centuries after Crishna, the Indian Apollo. ——— We have therefore determined another interesting epoch, by fixing the age of Crishna near the year 1214 before Christ. As the three first avatars or descents of Vishnu relate no less clearly to an universal deluge in which eight persons only were saved, than the fourth and fifth do to the punishment of impiety and the humiliation of the proud, we may for the present assume that the second, or silver age of the Hindoos, was subsequent to the dispersion from Babel; so that we have only a dark interval of about a thousand years, which were employed in the settlement of nations, and the cultivation of civilised society." Works of Sir William Jones, vol. i. p. 29. London, 1799. 4to.

[5] Cuvier's Theory of the Earth, pp. 156—159. The extravagant priority claimed for the Hindoo records and sciences over the writings of Moses by M. Bailly and some other modern infidel writers, has been fully disproved by Count Laplace, in his Exposition du Système du Monde, pp. 293, 294. 4to. or vol. ii. pp. 253, 254. of Mr. Pond's English translation; and by Captain Wilford and Mr. Bentley, in their elaborate Memoirs on Hindoo Chronology, inserted in the fifth volume of the Calcutta Memoirs or Asiatic Researches. The subject is also considered by Mr. Carwithen in the second of his Bampton Lectures; but the most compendious view of it is to be found in Dr. Nares's Bampton Lectures, pp. 222—227. and especially his lucid and satisfactory note, pp. 256—273.; which, depending upon minute calculations and deductions, will not admit of abridgement.

It is indeed a very remarkable fact concerning the deluge, that the memory of almost all nations ends in the history of it, even of those nations which were unknown until they were discovered by enterprising voyagers and travellers; and that the traditions of the deluge were kept up in all the rites and ceremonies of the Gentile world. And it is observable, that the farther we go back, the more vivid the traces appear, especially in those countries which were nearest to the scene of action. The reverse of this would happen, if the whole were originally a fable. The history would not only be less widely diffused; but, the more remote our researches, the less light we should obtain; and however we might strain our sight, the objects would by degrees grow faint, and the scene would terminate in clouds and darkness. Besides, there would not have been that correspondence and harmony in the traditions of different nations, which so plainly subsisted among them: now this could not be the result of chance, but must necessarily have arisen from the same history being universally acknowledged. These evidences are derived to us from people who were of different ages and countries, and, in consequence, widely separated from each other: and, what is extraordinary, they did not know, in many instances, the purport of the data which they transmitted, nor the value and consequence of their intelligence. In their mythology they adhered to the letter, without considering the meaning; and acquiesced in the hieroglyphic, though they were strangers to the purport of it. With respect to ourselves, it is a happy circumstance, not only that these histories have been transmitted to us, but also that, after an interval of so long a date, we should be able to see into the hidden mystery, and from these crude materials to obtain such satisfactory truths. We now proceed to notice a few of the most striking of these traditional narratives.

Thus Berosus, the Chaldæan historian, following the most ancient writings, as Josephus affirms[1], has related the same things as Moses, of the deluge, and of mankind perishing in it, and likewise of the ark in which *Nochus*, the restorer of the human race, was preserved, being carried to the summit of the Armenian mountains. Hieronymus the Egyptian, who wrote the antiquities of the Phœnicians, Nicolaus of Damascus, and many others, mention these things, as Josephus[2] also testifies. Further, there is a fragment preserved of Abydenus[3], an ancient Assyrian historian, in which mention is made of the deluge being foretold before it happened, and of the birds being sent forth three different times to see whether the earth was dried, and of the ark being driven into Armenia. He and others agree with Moses in the main circumstances, but in lesser particulars sometimes adulterate the truth with fabulous mixtures. Alexander Polyhistor, another ancient historian, is cited by Cyril[4] of Alexandria, together with Abydenus, and both to the same purpose. He says, that in the reign of Xisuthrus (the same as Noah) was the great deluge; that Xisuthrus was saved, Saturn having predicted to him what should happen, and that he ought to build an ark, and, together with the fowls and creeping things and cattle, to sail in it.

Among the Greeks, Plato[5] mentions the great deluge, in which the cities were destroyed, and useful arts were lost; and suggests that there was a great and universal deluge before the particular inundations celebrated by the Grecians. He

[1] Josephus contra Apion, lib. i. § 19. edit. Hudson.
[2] Joseph. Antiq. lib. i. cap. 3.
[3] Abyd. in Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. ix. cap. 12. edit. Vigeri.
[4] Cyril contra Jul. lib. i. p. 8. edit. Spanhemii.
[5] Plato de Leg. lib. iii. p. 677. tom. ii.; Timæus, p. 23. tom. iii. edit. Serrani.

plainly thought that there had been several deluges, but one greater than the rest. Moreover, it was the tradition of the Egyptians, as Diodorus[1] informs us, that most living creatures perished in the deluge, which was in Deucalion's time. Ovid's[2] description of Deucalion's flood is so well known and remembered by every scholar that it is needless to point out its identity with Noah's flood to any one who has received the least tincture of letters. Plutarch[3], in his treatise of the sagacity of animals, observes, that a dove was sent out by Deucalion, which, entering into the ark again, was a sign of the continuance of the flood, but afterwards flying away, was a sign of serene weather. Homer also plainly alludes to the particular of the rainbow, by[4] calling it a *sign* or *token* to men, τέρας μερόπων ἀνθρώπων.

Lucian mentions[5] more than once the great deluge in Dèucalion's time, and the ark which preserved the small remnant of human kind. He describes also the particulars of Deucalion's flood after the example of Noah's flood: the present race of men was not the first, but the former generation was all destroyed; this second race sprang from Deucalion: the former was a wicked and profligate generation, for which reason this great calamity befel them; the earth gave forth abundance of water, great showers of rain fell, and the rivers increased, and the sea swelled to such a degree, that all things were water, and all men perished: Deucalion alone was left for a second generation, on account of his prudence and piety; and he was preserved in this manner; he built a great ark, and entered into it with his wife and children, and to him swine, and horses, and lions, and serpents, and all other creatures which the earth maintains, came in pairs: he received them all, and they hurt him not; on the contrary, there was, by divine instinct, great friendship among them, and they sailed together in the same ark, as long as the water prevailed. At the beginning and in the conclusion, he professes to have received this account from the Grecians, so that he cannot be suspected of borrowing it from Scripture.[6]

The orthodox among the ancient Persians believed in a deluge, and that it was universal, and overwhelmed the whole earth. Similar traditions have prevailed in the East among the Hindoos, Burmans, and Chinese: of these, the tradition of the Chinese is particularly worthy of note, as it not only refers, both directly and indirectly, to the deluge itself, but also to the cause of it. The same tradition of a general flood is also to be traced among the ancient Goths and Druids, as well as among the Mexicans, Peruvians, Brazilians, and Nicaraguans; to whom may be added the very lately discovered inhabitants of Western Caledonia[7], the Cree Indians in the polar regions of North America[8], the Otaheitans before their conversion to Christianity, and also[9] the Sandwich Islanders.[10]

From these various evidences it is manifest that the heathens were well acquainted with all the leading circumstances of the universal deluge; that their traditions (though largely blended with fable)

[1] Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 10. edit. Rhodomani. [2] Ovid. Metamor. lib. i.

[3] Plutarch, de Solertia Animalium, p. 968. tom. ii. edit. Paris, 1624.

[4] Iliad. xi. 28.

[5] Lucian in Timon, p. 59. De Saltatione, p. 930. tom. i. et de Syria Dea, pp. 882, 883. tom. ii. edit. Benedicti.

[6] Bishop Newton's Works, vol. i. pp. 188—191.

[7] Harman's Journal of Voyages and Travels in Western Caledonia, abridged in the Quarterly Review, vol. xxvi. p. 415.

[8] Capt. Franklin's Journey to the Polar Sea, p. 73. London, 1823. 4to. or vol. i. pp. 113, 114. 8vo. edit. "The North American Indian," says Major Strickland, "is familiar with the history of the deluge. Indeed, the general idea of the flood all over the world seems fixed in the mind of the human family, from pole to pole, as if to give the lie to all the foolish quibbles of infidelity." Strickland's Twenty-seven Years in Canada West, vol. ii. p. 89.

[9] Ellis's Polynesian Researches, vol. i. pp. 62, 63.

[10] Most of the above noticed traditions are given at length in Mr. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, vol. i. pp. 98—136. with references to various authorities for each. Mr. Sharon Turner has also collected a truly valuable series of historical testimonies to the fact of the deluge in his "Sacred History of the World," vol. ii. pp. 270—289. eighth edit. Mr. Bryant's Analysis of Ancient Mythology (3 vols. 4to. or 6 vols. 8vo.), however, is the completest work on the subject of the deluge, as preserved in the traditions of the ancients; an abstract of his system is given in the Encyclopædias, Britannica and Perthensis, article *Deluge*.

bear a striking resemblance to the narrative of Moses; and that the moral certainty of that great event is established on a basis sufficiently firm to bid defiance to the cavils of scepticism. Instead, therefore, of asserting (as it had been asserted, contrary to all the evidence furnished by civil history), that we have no sufficient evidence to induce us to believe that the deluge ever took place,—"let the ingenuity of unbelief *first* account satisfactorily for this universal agreement of the pagan world, and she may then, with a greater degree of plausibility, impeach the truth of the scriptural narrative of the deluge."[1]

VIII. The first remarkable occurrence after the flood was the attempt to build the *Tower of Babel* (Gen. xi. 1—4.); and this is not omitted in pagan records.

Berosus, the Chaldee historian, mentions it, with the following additional circumstances, that it was erected by giants who waged war against the gods, and were at length dispersed, and that the edifice was beaten down by a great wind. According to Josephus, the building of this tower is also mentioned by Hestiæus, and by one of the ancient sibyls[2], and also, as Eusebius informs us, by Abydenus and Eupolemus.[3] The tower of Belus, mentioned by Herodotus, is, in all probability, the tower of Babel, repaired by Belus II., king of Babylon, who is frequently confounded by the ancient historians with Belus I., or Nimrod. That it was constructed with burnt bricks and bitumen (as we read in Gen. xi. 3.) is attested by Justin, Quintus Curtius, Vitruvius, and other heathen writers, and also by the relations of modern travellers, who have described its ruins.[4]

IX. The *History of the* DESTRUCTION *of Sodom and Gomorrah*

Is expressly attested by Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Solinus, Tacitus, Pliny, and Josephus; whose accounts mainly agree with the Mosaic narrative; and their reports concerning the physical appearance of the Dead Sea are confirmed in all material points by the relations of modern travellers[5], and especially by commander (now captain) Lynch, of the United States' Navy, who in 1847 first navigated the Dead Sea since the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, in his Narrative of the United States' Expedition to the River Jordan.[6]

X. Berosus, Alexander Polyhistor from Eupolemus and Melo (writers more ancient than himself), Nicolaus Damascenus, Artapanus, and other ancient historians cited by Josephus and Eusebius, make express and honourable mention of *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob,* and

[1] Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, vol. i. p. 136. For a notice of objections made by modern unbelievers to the Mosaic Narrative of the Deluge, as being contrary to matter of fact, see the Appendix to this volume, No. VIII. *infrà.*

[2] Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. i. c. 4. (al. c. 5.) § 3.

[3] Eusebius, de Præp. Evang. lib. ix. c. 14.

[4] The testimonies above noticed are given at length by Mr. Faber, Horæ Mosaicæ, vol. i. pp. 146—170. See also Dr. Hales's Analysis, vol. i. pp. 350—355.; Mr. Rich's Memoirs on the Ruins of Babylon, 8vo. 1818; Sir R. K. Porter's Travels in Georgia, Persia, &c., vol. ii. pp. 308—332.; and especially the recent learned researches of Mr. Layard, which contain one of the noblest monuments of the credibility of the sacred writers that can be furnished by profound learning and patient researches combined.

[5] Diod. Sic. lib. xix. c. 98. tom. viii. pp. 418—421. edit. Bipont. Strabo, lib. xvi. pp. 1087, 1088. edit. Oxon. Solinus, c. 36. Tacitus, Hist. lib. v. c. 6. (al. 7.) Pliny, Hist. Nat. lib. v. c. 16. lib. xxxv. c. 15. Josephus, de Bell. Jud. lib. iv. c. viii. § 4. Faber, vol. i. pp. 171—174.

[6] "Capt. Lynch gives the following account of the impression made upon himself and his friends by their careful examination of the river" [Jordan] "and of the lake" [or Dead Sea] in which it ends:—"It is for the learned to comment on the facts which we have laboriously collected. Upon ourselves the result is a decided one; we entered upon this sea with conflicting opinions. One of the party was sceptical; and another, I think, a professed unbeliever of the Mosaic account. After twenty-two days' close investigation, if I am not mistaken, *we were unanimous in the conviction of the truth of the Scriptural account* of the destruction of the cities of the Plain." (Narrative, p. 253.) Rawlinson's Bampton Lecture for 1859, p. 371.

Joseph, agreeing with the accounts of Moses; and Josephus states that Hecatæus wrote a book concerning Abraham, which was extant in his time, though it is now lost.[1]

XI. That Moses was not a mythological person (as has recently been affirmed, contrary to all history), but a real character and an eminent legislator, we have already shown in a preceding page.[2] To the testimonies there adduced, we may add, that the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, and their miraculous passage of the Red Sea, is attested by Berosus, Artapanus, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, Numenius, Justin, and Tacitus. Of these, the testimonies of Artapanus and Diodorus are particularly worthy of notice.

According to Artapanus, the Heliopolitans gave the following account of the passage of the Red Sea: — "The king of Egypt, as soon as the Jews had departed from his country, pursued them with an immense army, bearing along with him the consecrated animals. But Moses having by the divine command struck the waters with his rod, they parted asunder, and afforded a free passage to the Israelites. The Egyptians attempted to follow them, when fire suddenly flashed in their faces, and the sea returning to its usual channel, brought an universal destruction upon their army."[3] A similar tradition, though less minutely particular, is mentioned by Diodorus, as subsisting even at the time when he wrote. He relates, that among the Ichthyophagi, the natives of the spot, a tradition is given, which is preserved from their ancestors, that by a great ebb of the waters, the whole bosom of the gulf became dry, disclosing its weeds, the sea rolling upon the opposite shore. But the bare earth having been rendered visible from the very bottom of the abyss, the tide returning in its strength restored the passage once more to its former condition.[4] Nor is the old tradition of the country even yet extinct. According to a learned and respectable modern traveller, the inhabitants of Corondel and its neighbourhood (on the eastern side of the Red Sea) to this day preserve the remembrance of the deliverance of the Israelites; which event is further confirmed by the Red Sea being called, by the Arabian geographers, the *sea of Kolzum*, that is, of destruction.[5] "The very country, indeed, where the event is said to have happened, bears testimony in some degree to the accuracy of the Mosaical narrative. Still is the scriptural *Etham* denominated *Etti;* the wilderness of *Shur*, the mountain of *Sinai*, and the country of Paran, are still known by the same names[6]; and *Marah*, *Elath*, and *Midian*, are still familiar to the ears of the Arabs. The grove of Elim yet remains; and its twelve fountains have neither decreased nor diminished in number since the days of Moses."[7]

XII. Further, the HEATHEN WRITERS BORROWED IMAGES from the accounts communicated in the Scriptures, and attributed to their deities distinctions similar to those which are ascribed to the Divine Majesty, when God manifested himself to the world. Thus, both poets and historians represented the heathen deities to be veiled in clouds, as Jehovah appeared.

Many of their religious institutions were likewise evidently derived from the

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[1] Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. i. c. 7. Eusebius, Præp. Evang. lib. ix. cc. 17—23. The passages above referred to are given at length in Mr. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, vol. i. pp. 174—186.

[2] See pp. 49—55. *suprà.*

[3] Eusebius, Præp. Evang. lib. ix. c. 27. This circumstance (Mr. Faber remarks) of the Egyptians being struck with lightning, as well as being overwhelmed by the waves, is mentioned in Psalm lxxvii. 17., although unnoticed in the Pentateuch.

[4] Diod. Sic. lib. iii. c 39. (vol. iii. p. 279. edit. Bipont.)

[5] Dr. Shaw's Travels in Barbary and the Levant, vol. ii. pp. 99, 100. Edinb. 1808.

[6] Niebuhr's Travels, vol. i. pp. 189. 191.

[7] Faber, vol. i. pp. 189—191. See also Huet's Demonstratio Evangelica, prop. iv. vol. i. pp. 73—153., where very numerous additional collateral testimonies are given to the credibility of the Mosaic writings.

Mosaic appointments, as that of marriage and the observance of stated days, among the Greeks and Romans, and, indeed, among almost all nations. The rite of circumcision, which was appointed by the Almighty as a sign of a distinctive covenant with Abraham, and designed to be expressive of spiritual purity[1], was adopted by several nations not descended from that patriarch, as the Egyptians, Colchians, and others.[2] There are likewise other particulars in which the Greeks and Romans appear to have borrowed customs from the Jews. Thus Solon, conformably to the Jewish practice, decreed that the time of the sun setting on the mountains should be deemed the last hour of the day. This law was copied into the laws of the twelve tables, and observed by the Romans; whose laws concerning the inheritance and adoption of children, retribution in punishment of corporeal injuries, and other points, seem to have been framed on principles sanctioned by Moses; and traces of resemblance between the Hebrew and Roman codes are still to be discovered in the Institutes of Justinian. The Jewish custom of orphan girls marrying their next of kin also obtained among the heathens. The appropriation of a tenth part of the spoils, of the produce of lands, and of other things, to religious purposes, is mentioned by many pagan writers. Lycurgus distributed the possession of lands by lot, and rendered them inalienable. Those feasts, in which servants were put on an equality with their masters, were apparently borrowed from the Jews, and from the feast of tabernacles: and the reverence which the Jews paid to the state of the moon also influenced the Lacedemonians, who are supposed to have been early connected with the Jews; and who, in consequence of their superstition, having delayed the march of their army till after the new moon, were thus deprived of participating in the honour of the celebrated battle of Marathon, as they did not arrive till the day after it had taken place.[3]

The preceding statements and facts are surely sufficient to satisfy any candid inquirer, that the principal facts related in the books of Moses do not depend upon his solitary testimony; but that they are supported by the concurrent voice of all nations. Upon what principle can this coincidence be accounted for, if Moses had not been a real person, and if the events recorded by him had not actually occurred?

XIII. Many other things, which the Old Testament relates to have happened, subsequently to the giving of the law until the Babylonish captivity, are to be found among profane writers. A few of these shall be adduced: — Thus,

1. From the story of Moses's rod (Exod. iv. 17.) the heathens invented the fables of the Thyrsus of Bacchus and the Caduceus of Mercury.

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[1] Compare Gen. xvii. 12.; Rom. ii. 28, 29.; Phil. iii. 3.

[2] A modern opposer of the Bible has *affirmed*, contrary to all history, that the Jews borrowed the rite of circumcision from the Egyptians. From an obscure passage in Herodotus, who wrote several hundred years *after* Moses (and who collected his information from the Egyptian priests, whose extravagant claims to antiquity have long since been refuted), some learned men have *conjectured* that the Hebrews derived it from the Egyptians; but conjectures are not proofs. Indeed, so little dependence can be placed on the historical traditions of the Egyptians, the falsehood of which has been exposed by Sir John Marsham, that it is more than probable that the Egyptians derived it from the Hebrews or Ishmaelites; although, at this distance of time, it is impossible to account for the way in which circumcision became established among the Egyptians. It is, moreover, worthy of remark, that the practice of this rite among the Hebrews differed very considerably from that of the Egyptians. Among the former, it was a *religious* ceremony performed on the *eighth* day after the birth of the male child; but among the latter it was a point of mere decency and cleanliness, and was not performed until the thirteenth year, and then upon persons of both sexes. See Marsham's Chronicus Canon Ægyptiacus, and Spencer, de Legibus Hebræorum.

[3] Bp. Gray's Connection between Sacred and Profane Literature, vol. i. pp. 187—193. Huet, Demonstratio Evangelica, *ut suprà.*

2. The circumstance of *Jephthah's devoting his daughter* gave rise to the story of Iphigenia being sacrificed by her father Agamemnon.

3. The story of Scylla having cut off the purple lock of her father Nisus, king of Megara, and given it to his enemy, Minos (with whom he was then at war), and by that means destroyed both him and his kingdom, — was in all probability taken from the history of *Samson's being shaved.*

4. When Herodotus, the father of profane history, tells us, from the priests of Egypt, that their traditions had informed them, that in very remote ages the sun had four times departed from his regular course, having twice set where he ought to have risen, and twice risen where he ought to have set, — it is impossible to read this most singular tradition, without recollecting the narrative in the book of Joshua, which relates, "*That the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day;*" and the fact related in the history of Hezekiah "*that the sun went back ten degrees, on the dial of Ahaz.*" The priests of Egypt professed to explain the revolutions of the Nile, the fertility of their country, and the state of public health, by the influence of the sun; and, therefore, in mentioning the unexampled traditional phenomena alluded to, they adverted to a circumstance, which to them appeared as remarkable as the facts themselves, that those singular deviations of the sun from his course had produced no sensible effects on the state of the river, on the productions of the soil, on the progress of diseases, or on deaths. The circumstances are not mentioned in the same form by Joshua and Herodotus, but they are in substance the same in both the narratives. And, supposing the traditions to have been founded on facts, it can scarcely be doubted that they relate to the same events; especially when we recollect, that where so much was ascribed to the influence of the sun, such remarkable deviations from the course of ordinary experience could not fail to be handed down through many ages.[1]

5. Eupolemus and Dius, as quoted by Eusebius and Grotius, mention many remarkable circumstances of David and Solomon, agreeing with the Old Testament history[2]; and Herodotus has a remarkable passage which evidently refers to the destruction of the Assyrians in the reign of Hezekiah, in which he mentions Sennacherib by name.[3] As we advance further to the Assyrian monarchy, the Scripture accounts agree with the profane ones rectified; and when we descend still lower to the æra of Nabonassar and to the kings of Babylon and Persia, who are posterior to this æra, and are recorded in Ptolemy's canon or series of them, we find the agreement of sacred and profane history much more exact, there being certain criteria in profane history for fixing the facts related in it. And it is remarkable, that not only the direct relations of the historical books, but also the indirect mention of things in the prophecies, correspond with the true chronology; which is an unquestionable evidence for their genuineness and truth.

The history contained in the Old Testament is throughout distinct, methodical, and consistent; while profane history is utterly deficient in the first ages, and full of myths or fictions in the succeeding ages; and becomes clear and precise in the principal facts, *only* about the period when the Old Testament history ends: so that the latter corrects and regulates the former, and renders it intelligible in many instances which must otherwise be given up as utterly inexplicable. How then can we suppose the Old Testament history not to be genuine and true, or a wicked imposture to be made, and not only continue undiscovered, but even to increase to a most audacious height in a nation, that, of all others, kept the most exact accounts of time? It is further worthy of remark, that this same nation, who may not have lost so much as one year from the creation of the world to the Babylonish captivity, as soon as they were deprived of the assistance of the prophets, became the most inaccurate in their

[1] Herodotus, Euterpe, pp. 144, 145. edit. Vallæ.
[2] Eusebius, Præp. Evang. lib. ix. cc. 30—34. 39—41. Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. viii. c. 2.
[3] Lib. ii. c. 141.

methods of keeping time; there being nothing more erroneous than the accounts of Josephus and the modern Jews, from the time of Cyrus to that of Alexander the Great: notwithstanding that all the requisite aids might easily have been borrowed from the neighbouring nations, who now kept regular annals. Whence it appears that the exactness of the sacred history was owing to divine assistance.[1] To the preceding considerations and facts we may add, that the manners of the persons mentioned in the Scriptures are characterised by that simplicity and plainness, which is also ascribed to the first ages of the world by pagan writers, and both of them concur to prove the novelty of the then present race, and consequently the deluge.

XIV. Lastly, the Fertility of the Soil of Palestine, which is so frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, is confirmed by the unanimous testimony of ancient writers[2], as well as of most, if not all, the travellers who have visited that country.[3] Its *present* reduced and miserable state, therefore, furnishes no ground for the objection which some modern opposers of revelation have raised against the Bible. Were Palestine to be as well inhabited and as well cultivated as formerly, its produce would exceed all calculation.

Besides these attestations from natural and profane history, we may consider the Jews themselves as bearing testimony to this day, in all countries of the world, to the truth of their ancient history, that is, to the truth of the Old and New Testaments. *Allow* this, and it will be easy to see how they should still persist in their attachment to that religion, those laws, and those predictions which so manifestly condemn them, both in past times and in the present. Suppose, however, that any considerable alterations have been made in their ancient history,—that is, any such alteration as may answer the purposes of infidelity, and their present state will be *inexplicable*.[4]

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§ 2. *Testimonies of Profane Writers to the Credibility of the New Testament.*

Striking as is the evidence for the credibility and truth of the facts and events related in the Old Testament, furnished by natural and civil history, the books of the New Testament are verified in a manner still more illustrious; these books being written, and the facts mentioned in them being transacted during the times of Augustus, Tiberius, and the succeeding Cæsars. The learned and most exact Dr. Lardner has collected from profane writers a variety of important testimonies to the truth of the New Testament, in the first part of his

[1] The various proofs of the facts above stated may be seen in Dr. Edwards on Scripture, vol. i. pp. 193—223. Sir H. M. Wellwood's Discourses, pp. 18, 19. Hartley on Man, vol. ii. p. 116.

[2] See Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. v. c. i. § 21. lib. xv. c. 5. § 1. De Bell. Jud. lib. iii. c. 3. § 2. and Hecatæus in Josephus, contr. Apion. lib. i. § 22. Pliny, Hist. Nat. lib. v. c. 17. Tacitus, Hist. lib. v. c. 6. Justin, lib. xxxvi. c. 3. and Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xiv. c. 26.

[3] See particularly the testimonies of Maundrell and Dr. Shaw, collected in Dr. Macknight's Harmony, vol. i. discourses vi. and vii. Dr. E. D. Clarke's Travels, part ii. pp. 520, 521. 4to. or vol. iv. pp. 283—285. 8vo. edit. See also Vol. III. pp. 84—87. *infrà.*

[4] Hartley on Man, vol. ii. 117.

"Credibility of the Gospel History," and also in his "Jewish and Heathen Testimonies;" from which elaborate works the following particulars are chiefly abridged. The results of his observations may be arranged under the following heads; viz. Testimonies of Jewish and Pagan authors to the account of princes and governors mentioned in the New Testament; — Testimonies to the character of the Jewish and heathen nations, which are either directly mentioned, or incidentally alluded to therein; — Testimonies of Jewish adversaries to the name and faith of Christ; — Testimonies of Pagan adversaries to the character of Jesus Christ, and also relative to the doctrines, character, innocency of life, and constancy of the first Christians in the profession of their faith.

I. Testimonies of Jewish and Pagan Authors to the Account of Princes and Governors mentioned in the New Testament.

Josephus and various heathen writers mention Herod, Archelaus, Pontius Pilate, and other persons, whose names occur in the New Testament; and they differ but little from the evangelical historians, concerning their offices and characters.

1. From the New Testament we learn that Jesus was born at Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king; and Josephus informs us that a prince of that name reigned over all Judæa for thirty-seven years, even to the reign of Augustus. Concerning this Herod, Matthew (ii. 1—16.) relates that he commanded all the male children in Bethlehem and its immediate vicinity to be put to death; because he had heard, that in that place was born one who was to be the king of the Jews. To us, who are accustomed to the finer feelings of Christianity, this appears almost incredible; but the character of Herod, as portrayed by Josephus, is such a compound of ambition and sanguinary cruelty as renders the evangelical narrative perfectly credible. Herod left three sons, Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Philip, among whom his territories were divided. According to Josephus, Herod by his will appointed Archelaus to succeed him in Judæa, with the title of king; and assigned the rest of his dominions to Herod Antipas as tetrarch of Galilee, and to Philip as tetrarch of Trachonitis and the neighbouring countries; and, according to the narrative of Luke (iii. 1.) these two princes were tetrarchs in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar.

2. The will of Herod, however, being only partially confirmed by Augustus, Archelaus was appointed ruler over Judæa and Idumea with the title of ethnarch, the regal dignity being withheld until he should deserve it. But Archelaus soon assumed the title; and Josephus, who has given us an account of this limitation, calls him the king that succeeded Herod, and has used the verb *reigning* with reference to the duration of his government. It likewise appears from the Jewish historian, that Archelaus was a cruel and tyrannical prince. All these circumstances attest the veracity of the evangelist Matthew, who says (ii. 22.) that when Joseph *heard that Archelaus did* reign *in Judæa, in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither, and turned aside into the parts of Galilee*, which were under the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas.

3. Luke relates (Acts xii. 1—3.) that Herod *the king stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the church, and that he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword; and because he saw that it* pleased *the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also.* The correctness of this statement is also confirmed by Josephus, from whom we learn that this Herod was a grandson of Herod the Great, whom the favour of the emperors Caligula and Claudius had raised to royal dignity, and to whom nearly all the territories that had been possessed by his grandfather were gradually restored. He was also exceedingly zealous for the institutions and customs of the Jews; and this zeal of his accounts for putting James to death, and causing Peter to be apprehended. The death of this monarch is related by Luke and Josephus with so much harmony, that if the latter had been a Christian, one would have cer-

tainly believed that he intended to write a commentary on that narrative. This haughty monarch had deferred giving an audience to the Tyrian and Sidonian ambassadors, who had solicited peace with him, until a certain day.[1] *And upon a set day*[2] *Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne*[3], *and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man."*[4] *And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him*[5], *because he gave not God the glory.*[6] *And he was eaten of worms*[7], *and gave up the ghost.* (Acts xii. 20—23.) Both historians relate the fact, as to the chief particulars, in the same manner. Luke describes the pride of the king, as well as the nature of his illness, more circumstantially; and omits a superstitious addition which is recorded by Josephus;—a proof that the former surpasses in fidelity, accuracy, and judgment, even this learned historian of the Jews.[8] Herod had three daughters, Bernice, Mariamne, and Drusilla; the last of whom, according to Josephus and Luke, was married to Felix, who was appointed governor of Judæa on the death of Herod.

4. According to the testimonies of Tacitus and Josephus, this FELIX was an oppressive, avaricious, and tyrannical governor, who had persuaded Drusilla to abandon her lawful husband, Azizus, king of the Emesenes, and to live with him. It was not unnatural for such a man to tremble, when Paul *reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come*, and to hope that the Apostle would have given him money to liberate him. (Acts xxiv. 25, 26.)[9]

5. Luke (Acts xviii. 14—16.) gives an honourable character of the temper and manners of GALLIO[10]; and this account is confirmed by Gallio's brother, the cele-

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[1] Josephus (Ant. Jud. lib. xviii. c. 8. § 2.) has not mentioned this particular circumstance; but he informs us, that the termination of the king's life succeeded a festival which had been appointed in honour of the emperor Claudius. Hence we may conceive why Herod deferred to receive the ambassadors from Tyre and Sidon until that particular day, viz. that he might show himself with so much greater pomp to the people.

[2] Josephus determines this day expressly. It was the second day of the shows, which were exhibited at Cæsarea, in honour of the emperor.

[3] Josephus says, that he came into the theatre, early in the morning, dressed in a robe or garment made *wholly of silver* (στολὴν ἐνδυσάμενος ἐξ ἀργύρου πεποιημένην ΠΑΣΑΝ) of most wonderful workmanship; and that the reflection of the rays of the rising sun from the silver gave him a majestic and awful appearance.

[4] In a short time (says Josephus) his flatterers exclaimed, one from one place and one from another (though not for his good), that "he was a god;" and they entreated him to be propitious to them, saying, "Hitherto we have reverenced thee as a man, but henceforth we acknowledge that thou art exalted above mortal nature."

[5] Josephus has here inserted a superstitious story, that Herod, shortly after, looking up, perceived an owl sitting on a certain cord over his head, which he held to be an evil omen. The *fact* itself he thus relates: — Immediately after, he was seized with pains in his bowels, extremely violent at the very first, and was carried to his palace!!

[6] The very same cause is assigned by Josephus, viz. Because the king had neither reproved his flatterers, nor rejected their impious adulation.

[7] Josephus has not described the disease so circumstantially: he relates that Herod died, worn out by the excruciating pain in his bowels. Luke states that *he was eaten of worms*. These narratives are perfectly consistent. Luke relates the *cause*, Josephus the *effect* of his disease; on the nature of which the reader may consult Dr. Mead's Medica Sacra, c. 5.

[8] Less on the Authenticity of the New Testament, pp. 314, 315.

[9] The proofs of all the above particulars are stated, at length, by Dr. Lardner, in his Credibility of the Gospel History, part i. book i. chap. i. — Works, vol. i. pp. 11—31. 8vo. or vol. i. pp. 9—20. 4to.

[10] From the conduct of Gallio on the occasion described by the evangelist Luke in Acts xviii. 14—16. the terms "Gallionism" and "Gallio-like" have been invented, and are not unfrequently though erroneously used, to denote utter indifference to religion. But "that he took not cognisance of the cause which was brought before him, proceeded not from his stupidity, indolence, or negligence, but from his *strict* adherence to the Roman laws."... "It is well known, that the affairs of religion were always a principal part of the care of the Roman magistrates and senate; and as they had many laws on that subject, so we frequently read of their execution. The true reason, why Gallio did not interpose in the affair brought before him, was, because the senate and emperors had by various decrees, and particularly the then reigning emperor Claudius, allowed the Jews everywhere under their dominion to govern themselves according to their own laws in all matters of religion. This being such, he esteemed it not of his cognisance; therefore he says (verse 15.), '*I will*

brated philosopher Seneca, who represents him as a man of a sweet and gentle disposition, and of much generosity and virtue.[1] Gallio is styled by the evangelical historian, in our translation, the *deputy*, but in the original Greek, the *proconsul* of Achaia.[2] The accuracy of Luke in this instance is very remarkable. In the partition of the provinces of the Roman empire, Macedonia and Achaia were assigned to the people and senate of Rome; but, in the reign of Tiberius, they were, at their own request, transferred to the emperor. In the reign of Claudius (A. U. C. 797, A. D. 44), they were again restored to the senate, after which time proconsuls were sent into this country. Paul was brought before Gallio, A. D. 52 or 53, consequently he was proconsul of Achaia, as Luke expressly terms him. There is likewise a peculiar propriety in the name of the province of which Gallio was proconsul. The country subject to him was all Greece; but the proper name of the province among the Romans was Achaia, as appears from various passages of the Roman historians, and especially from the testimony of the Greek geographer Pausanias, which are given at length by Dr. Lardner.[3]

II. Equally striking with the preceding testimonies to the credibility of the New Testament history, is the agreement between the evangelical historians and profane writers, relative to the SECTS, MORALS, AND CUSTOMS OF THE JEWS.

1. Thus it appears from Josephus, that they enjoyed the free exercise of their religion, with the power of accusing and prosecuting, but not of putting any man to death. In consequence of this power, they importuned Pilate to crucify Jesus; and when he commanded them to take him and crucify him, they said, *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.* (John xviii. 31.)

2. Further, it appears from Philo, Josephus, and other writers, that the Jews were dispersed into many countries before the destruction of Jerusalem; and Luke tells us, in different parts of the Acts of the Apostles, that Paul preached in the Jewish synagogues at Antioch, Iconium, Thessalonica, Athens, Ephesus, and Rome.

3. The accounts, related by the evangelists, of the sects of Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians, as well as of the depravity of the Jewish nation, in the time of Christ, and of the antipathy that subsisted between the Samaritans and the Jews, are all confirmed by Josephus; and the Roman mode of treating prisoners and crucifying criminals, as mentioned in the New Testament, is corroborated by the testimonies of Cicero, Plutarch, and other writers, who have incidentally mentioned it.[4] According to Luke's narrative (Acts ix. 36.), the person whom Peter raised from the dead at Joppa was named Tabitha or Dorcas; and it appears from Josephus that this name was at that time in common use.[5] The same evangelist relates, that there was a great famine throughout the land of Judæa in the reign of the emperor Claudius (Acts xi. 28, 29.): Josephus also mentions this calamity, which

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be no judge of such matters:' had you accused this man of injustice, violence, or crimes against the state, I would willingly have heard you; but I am not sent here as a judge of your religious differences: these are to be rectified among yourselves." Biscoe on the Acts, p. 55. Oxford edition, 1829, p. 55.

[1] "Solebam tibi dicere, Gallionem fratrem meum (quem nemo non parum amat, etiam qui amare plus non potest), alia vitia non nosse, hoc etiam (*i. e.* adulationem) odisse. — Nemo enim mortalium uni tam dulcis est, quam hic omnibus. — Hoc quoque loco blanditiis tuis restitit, ut exclamares invenisse te inexpugnabilem virum adversus insidias, quas nemo non in sinum recipit." L. Ann. Seneca, Natural. Quæst. lib. iv. in præf. Op. tom. iv. p. 267. edit. Bipont. The learned John Selden, in a letter to Archbishop Usher, has collected the various passages, which are to be found in the ancient classic authors, relative to Gallio. Seldeni Opera, tom. ii. part ii. cols. 1712 and 1713.

[2] Γαλλίωνος ΑΝΘΥΠΑΤΟΥ ΟΝΤΟΣ τῆς Ἀχαΐας. Acts xviii. 12.

[3] Lardner's Credibility, part i. book i. chap. i. § xii. — Works, vol. i. p. 32. 8vo. or vol. i. p. 20. 4to.

[4] The above noticed particulars are illustrated, *infrà*, Vol. III. Dr. Lardner has treated them at full length in his Credibility, part i. book i. chapters ii.—x. Works, vol. i. pp. 33—237. 8vo.; or vol. i. pp. 20—130. 4to.

[5] Ottii Spicilegium ex Josepho ad Novi Testamenti illustrationem, pp. 278, 279. 8vo. Lug. Bat. 1741.

began in the fourth year of that reign, but raged chiefly in the two following years; and says, that many persons died for want of means to procure food.[1]

4. When Paul was taken prisoner, in consequence of an uproar which the Jews at Jerusalem had excited against him, the Roman chiliarch, according to the relation of Luke (Acts xxi. 38.) asked him, *Art thou not that Egyptian, which before these days* (or a short time since) *madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men, that were murderers?* Josephus has recorded at length the transactions here incidentally mentioned. During the government of Felix, and consequently at the time alluded to by Luke, an Egyptian, who pretended to be a prophet, led into the wilderness several thousand men, and marched against Jerusalem, promising that the walls should fall down at his command. But Felix marched out of the city with a strong force, and attacked the impostor, who escaped with only a small part of his army. There is a remarkable agreement between the chiliarch or chief captain in the Acts and Josephus. The former says, *Art thou not* THAT EGYPTIAN? Josephus has nowhere mentioned the name of this man, but calls him THE *Egyptian*, and THE EGYPTIAN *false prophet.*[2]

5. In Acts vi. 9. the sacred historian "speaks of a synagogue at Jerusalem belonging to a class of persons whom he calls Λιβερτῖνοι" (in our version rendered Libertines), "a term which is evidently the same with the Latin *Libertini.* Now, whatever meaning we affix to this word (for it is variously explained), — whether we understand emancipated slaves or the sons of emancipated slaves, — they must have been the slaves or the sons of slaves to Roman masters; otherwise the Latin word, *Libertini*, would not apply to them. That among persons of this description there were many at Rome who professed the Jewish religion, whether slaves of Jewish origin, or proselytes after manumission, is nothing very extraordinary. But that they should have been so numerous at Jerusalem as to have a synagogue in that city, built for their particular use, appears at least to be more than might be expected. Some commentators, therefore, have supposed that the term in question, instead of denoting emancipated Roman slaves, or the sons of such persons, was an adjective belonging to the name of some city or district; while others, on mere conjecture, have proposed to alter the term itself. But the whole difficulty is removed by a passage in the second book of the "Annals of Tacitus[3];" from which it appears that the persons whom that historian describes as being *libertini generis*, and infected (as he calls it) with foreign — that is, with Jewish — superstition, were so numerous in the time of the emperor Tiberius, that four thousand of them, who were of age to carry arms, were sent to the island of Sardinia; and that all the rest of them were ordered either to renounce their religion or to depart from Italy before a day appointed. This statement of Tacitus is confirmed by Suetonius[4], who relates that Tiberius disposed of the young men among the Jews then at Rome (under pretence of their serving in the wars) in provinces of an unhealthy climate; and that he banished from the city all the rest of that nation, or proselytes to that religion, under penalty of being condemned to slavery for life, if they did not comply with his commands. We can now therefore account for the number of Libertini in Judæa, at the period of which Luke was speaking, which was about fifteen years after their banishment from Italy.

III. The CHARACTERS AND PURSUITS OF THE HEATHEN NATIONS, which are incidentally introduced into the New Testament, are equally corroborated by the testimonies of profane writers.

1. The diligent investigation and pursuit of wisdom formed the general character of the Greeks.

Thus Paul declares, — *the Greeks seek after wisdom* (1 Cor. i. 22.); and this account of them is amply attested by all the authors of those times, who take notice of their avidity in the cultivation of philosophy and literature. Not to multiply unnecessary evidence, we may remark, that there is a passage in Hero-

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[1] Ant. Jud. lib. xx. c. 2. *fine*, and c. 5. § 2.

[2] Lardner's Credibility, part i. book ii. chap. viii. Works, vol. i. pp. 414—419. 8vo.; or vol. i. pp. 225—228. 4to.

[3] Annal. lib. ii. c. 85. Bp. Marsh's Lectures, Part VI. p. 70.

[4] In Tiberio, c. 36.

dotus, which most strongly corroborates Paul's character of them. He says, that the Peloponnesians "affirm that Anacharsis was sent by the Scythian monarch into Greece for the express purpose of improving himself in *science;* and they add, that at his return he informed his employer, *that all the people of Greece were occupied in scientific pursuits, except the Lacedemonians.*"[1] To this general character of the Greeks there are many allusions in the writings of Paul. He informs us, that they regarded the Christian doctrine with sovereign contempt, as *foolishness*, because it was not ornamented with wisdom of words, and with the figures and flowers of a vain and showy rhetoric; and he urges this very circumstance as a signal proof of the divine truth and authority of the Christian religion, that it made a rapid and triumphant progress in the world, and even among this very refined and philosophical people, though totally divested of all those studied decorations with which their several schemes of philosophy were so industriously embellished. Thus he tells the Corinthians that when he first published the Gospel among them, he studied not to ornament it by elegance of diction, or by the display of superior wisdom; for it was his fixed determination to disclaim all knowledge among them, except the knowledge of Jesus Christ and his crucifixion; that he appeared among them in tremour and diffidence, in a plain, artless, and undisguised manner; and that his public discourses did not recommend themselves by any elaborate persuasive arts of human erudition, but were confirmed to them by spiritual gifts and by miracles; so that their conviction of the truth of the Gospel did not stand in learned arguments philosophically expressed, but in the power of God.[2]

2. With regard to the ATHENIANS in particular, Paul represents them as very devout, greatly addicted to religious practices, and entirely devoted to the worship of the multiplicity of deities which they had received; and he takes notice that their city was full of idols. (Acts xvii. 22, 23.)

To the correctness of this description of the Athenian character all antiquity bears testimony; and that they adopted the gods of all nations, and crowded into their capital all the divinities of the then known world. Their streets were encumbered with statues, so that it was said to be easier, at Athens, to find a God than a man.[3] The account given of the Athenians by St. Luke, — that *all the Athenians and strangers which were in their city spent their time in nothing else, but to tell or hear some new thing* (Acts xvii. 21.) — is confirmed by the testimony of Demosthenes[4], who describes them as loitering about and inquiring in the places of public resort, if there be any news? Iamblichus passes a similar censure upon the Greeks in general.[5]

3. The general character of the CRETANS, noticed in Paul's epistle to Titus, is confirmed by the testimony of antiquity.

The Apostle, writing to Titus, who had been left in Crete to regulate the affairs of the Christian church in that island, complains of many disorderly men there, — *many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, who subvert whole houses* (or families),

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[1] Herodotus, lib. iv. c. 77. tom. i. p. 277. Oxon. 1809.

[2] 1 Cor. ii. 1—5.

[3] Dr. Harwood's Introduction to the New Test. vol. ii. p. 69.

[4] The passage of Demosthenes above alluded to occurs in his first oration against Philip king of Macedon, and is noticed by Longinus (sect. 18.) as a fine specimen of the use of *interrogations* in the sublime. — "Is it," says the orator, — "Is it your sole ambition to wander through the public places, *each inquiring of the other*, 'WHAT NEWS?' Can any thing be more *new*, than that a man of Macedon should conquer the Athenians, and give law to Greece?" — (Oratores Græci, a Reiske, tom. i. p. 43.) Towards the close of Demosthenes's oration on Philip's Letter to the Athenians, the orator, speaking of the successes of Philip, has the following passage:—"How is it that, in the late war, his arms had such superior fortune? This is the cause (for I will speak with undaunted freedom), he takes the field himself; endures its toils, and shares its dangers; no favourable incident escapes him. While *we* (for the truth must not be concealed) are confined within our walls in perfect inactivity, delaying, and voting, *and inquiring in the public places, whether there is* ANY THING NEW? Can any thing better deserve the name of *new*, than that a Macedonian should insult Athens?"—(Ibid. pp. 156, 157.) The modern Athenians are not less inquisitive than their ancestors. See an instance in Mr. Hughes's Travels in Sicily, &c. vol. ii. p. 306.

[5] They are, says this philosopher, greatly addicted to novelty, perpetually running about, from one place to another, in pursuit of it, — unstable, and without ballast. Iamblichus, De Mysteriis, sect. vii. § 5.

teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake (Tit. i. 10, 11.); and he quotes (12.) the following verse from *one of themselves, a prophet of their own*, viz. Epimenides, who was a Cretan poet, and whose writings were by the ancients termed ΧΡΗΣΜΟΙ, or *oracles*,

Κρῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί.[1]

The general import of which passage is, that *the Cretans were always a false people; and united in their character the ferocity of the wild beast with the luxury of the domesticated one.* The circumstances of Paul's styling Epimenides a *prophet* is sufficiently explained by the fact of the words *poet* and *prophet* being often used promiscuously by the Greeks and Romans,—probably because their poets pretended to be inspired, and were by some believed to be so. The Apostle adds, that the testimony of Epimenides is but too true, — *this witness is true.* How true the first part of it is, with respect to their deceit and lying, the following facts will attest. From the time of Homer, the island of Crete was regarded as the scene of fiction. Many authors affirm that, as a people, its inhabitants were infamous for their violation of truth; and at length their falsehood became so notorious, that Κρητίζειν, to *cretise*, or imitate the Cretans, was a proverbial expression among the ancients for LYING.

IV. The Testimonies furnished by Jewish Adversaries to the Name and Faith of Christ are further Corroborations of the New Testament.

1. Thus Josephus, — in a passage of his Jewish Antiquities, which the opposers of Christianity (unable to resist its force) have, contrary to all evidence, affirmed to be spurious, — bears the following testimony to the character, miracles, and doctrines of Jesus Christ.[2]

After relating a sedition of the Jews against Pontius Pilate, which the latter had quelled, he says, — "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he performed many wonderful works. He was the teacher of such men as received the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many of the Jews, and also many of the Gentiles. *This was the Christ* (ὁ Χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν). — And when Pilate, at the instigation of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those who had loved him from the first did not cease to adhere to him. For he appeared to them alive again, on the third day; the divine prophets having foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe (or sect) of Christians, so named from him, subsists to this time."

2. The Talmuds[3], though blended with much falsehood and with malicious insinuations against Jesus Christ, refer to his nativity, relate his journey into Egypt, and do not deny that he performed numerous eminent miracles.

But they absurdly ascribe them to his having acquired the right pronunciation of the Shemmaphoresh, or the ineffable name of God, which (they say) he clandestinely stole out of the temple; or they impute it to the magic arts, which he learnt in Egypt (whence they affirm that he brought them, having inserted them in his

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[1] Epimenides. apud Fabricii Bibliothec. Græc. lib. i. c. 6. § 3. Harwood's Introduction to the New Test. vol. ii. pp. 70, 71. Dodd's Translation of Callimachus's Hymns, p. 3. note, where it is shown that Paul did *not* cite Callimachus, as some learned men have thought; and some additional testimonies, from classic authors, are produced for the bad character of the ancient Cretans.

[2] Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. xviii. c. 3. § 3. That the passage referred to *is* genuine, see the Appendix to this Volume, No. VII. *infrà.*

[3] The Talmuds are two in number, and consist of two parts, viz. the *Mishna* and the *Gemara.* — The Mishna is a collection of Jewish traditions, which are said to have been committed to writing by Rabbi Jehudah, surnamed *Hakkadosh* or the *Holy*, about the middle of the second century. On this there are extant two commentaries by the Jews, called *Gemara*, i. e. perfection; viz. that of Jerusalem, which was compiled in the third or fourth century; and that of Babylon, compiled in the sixth century. When the Mishna or text, and the *Gemara* or commentary accompany each other, they are called the *Talmud;* and accordingly as the Jerusalem or Babylonish commentary accompanies the Mishna, it is called the Jerusalem or Babylonish Talmud.

flesh), and exercised with greater dexterity than any other impostor ever did! They call him Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Mary, the daughter of Eli, whose son he was without the knowledge of her husband. After this, they say, he fled into Egypt, and there learned those magic arts by which he was enabled to perform all his miracles. Again, they own that two witnesses were suborned to swear against him, and declare that he was crucified on the evening of the passover. Mention is also made in these writings of several of his disciples, of Matthew, Thaddæus, and Bauni, the name of him who was afterwards called Nicodemus, and of whom, as a very great, and good, and pious ruler, much is related in these books. In one of them Eliezer tells his friend Akiba, that he met with James, a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth, in Zippor, a town in Galilee, who gave him the interpretation of a passage in the Old Testament, which he had received from Jesus, and with which Eliezer was at that time pleased. That the disciples of Jesus had the power of working miracles, and the gift of healing, in the name of their Master, is confessed by these Jews; who give an instance of it in the grandson of Rabbi Joshua, the son of Levi, who being in great danger, one of the disciples came, and would have cured him in the name of Jesus. This power is again acknowledged in the case of the son of Dama, grandson of Ishmael, who was dying of the bite of a serpent, when James, the same who had the conference with Eliezer, came and offered to cure the young man, but the grandfather forbad it, and he died. In a much later work of the Jews (the Toledoth Jesu), and that the most virulent of all the invectives against Jesus, his power of raising from the dead, and healing leprous persons, is repeatedly acknowledged.[1] Further, it appears from the Talmuds, that Christ was put to death on the evening of the passover, and that a crier preceded him for forty days, proclaiming, "This man comes forth to be stoned because he dealt in sorcery, and persuaded and seduced Israel." But the Talmudical acknowledgments of the miracles, of his preaching, and of his suffering as a malefactor, are blended with most virulent aspersions of his character, of his mother Mary, and also of the Christians.[2] The falsehood of these assertions has been well exposed by Professor Vernet.[3] Concerning the destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian and Titus, the testimony of the Talmuds is very valuable.

V. Nor are the testimonies of heathen adversaries to Christianity less explicit or less satisfactory than those stated in the preceding pages: these may be arranged under two classes, viz. 1. Testimonies to the life and character of Jesus Christ; and, 2. Testimonies relative to the Christians.

1. TESTIMONIES TO THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST AS A REAL LIVING AND HISTORICAL PERSON.

(1.) PONTIUS PILATE.—The ancient Romans were particularly careful to preserve the memory of all remarkable events which happened in the city; and this was done either in their *Acts of the Senate* (*Acta Senatûs*), or in the *Daily Acts of the People* (*Acta Diurna Populi*), which were diligently made and kept at Rome.[4] In like manner, it was customary for the governors of provinces to send to the emperor an account of remarkable transactions that occurred in the places where they resided, which were preserved as the *acts* of their respective governments. Of this custom the letter from Pliny to Trajan, given in pp. 178, 179., is a memorable example. Such a custom, indeed, is necessarily incident to all states possessing conquered or de-

[1] Dr. Gregory Sharpe's Argument in Defence of Christianity taken from the concessions of the most ancient adversaries, pp. 40—48. (London, 1755, 8vo.) In the notes he has given the passages from the Talmudical writers at length, in Hebrew and English.

[2] Dr. Lardner's Jewish Testimonies, chap. v. Works, vol. vii. pp. 138—161. 8vo. or vol. iii. pp. 547—560. 4to.

[3] In his Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tom. x. pp. 253—264.

[4] See a further account of these *Acta* in Adam's Roman Antiquities, p. 18.

tached provinces. In conformity with this usage, Pilate kept memoirs of the Jewish affairs during his procuratorship, which were therefore called *Acta Pilati.* Referring to this usage, Eusebius (who wrote about the year 318) says: "Our Saviour's resurrection being much talked of throughout Palestine, Pilate informed the emperor of it, as likewise of his miracles, of which he had heard; and that, being raised up after he had been put to death, he was already believed by many to be a God."[1] These accounts were never published for general perusal, but were deposited among the archives of the empire, where they served as a fund of information to historians. Hence we find, long before the time of Eusebius, that the primitive Christians, in their disputes with the Gentiles, appealed to these Acts of Pilate as to most undoubted testimony. Thus, Justin Martyr, in his first apology for the Christians, which was presented to the emperor Antoninus Pius and the senate of Rome, about the year 140, having mentioned the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and some of its attendant circumstances, adds,—"*And that these things were so done, you may know from the* ACTS *made* (or, *written*) *in the time of* PONTIUS PILATE." Afterwards, in the same apology, having noticed some of our Lord's miracles, such as healing diseases and raising the dead, he says,—*And that these things were done by him, you may know from the* ACTS *made in the time of* PONTIUS PILATE."[2]

The learned Tertullian, in his Apology for Christianity, about the year 200, after speaking of our Saviour's crucifixion and resurrection, and his appearance to the disciples, and ascension into heaven in the sight of the same disciples, who were ordained by him to publish the Gospel over the world, thus proceeds:—"*Of all these things relating to Christ,* PILATE *himself,* in his conscience already a Christian, SENT AN ACCOUNT *to Tiberius,* then emperor."[3] The same writer, in the same Apology, thus relates the proceedings of Tiberius on receiving this information:—"There was an ancient decree that no one should be received for a deity, unless he was first approved by the senate. Tiberius, in whose time the Christian name" (or religion) "had its rise, having received from Palestine in Syria an account of such things as manifested the truth of his" (Christ's) "divinity, proposed to the senate that he should be enrolled among the Roman gods, and gave his own prerogative vote in favour of the motion. But the senate" (without whose consent no deification could take place) "rejected it, because the emperor himself had declined the same honour. Nevertheless, the emperor persisted in his opinion, and threatened punishment to the accusers of the Christians. *Search* YOUR OWN COMMENTARIES" (or public records), "*you will there find that Nero was the first who raged with the imperial sword against this sect, when rising most at Rome.*"[4] These testimonies of Justin and

[1] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. c. 2.
[2] Justin Martyr, Apol. prima, pp. 65. 72. edit. Benedict.
[3] Tertullian, Apologia, c. 21.
[4] Ibid. c. 5. To Tertullian's account Eusebius adds, that Tiberius threatened the accusers of the Christians with the punishment of death: and he considers this interference of the Roman emperor as *providentially* designed to promote the propagation of

Tertullian are taken, not from any Acts of Pilate in their own possession (who might have been imposed upon by an early forgery)[1], but from public apologies for the Christian religion, which were presented either to the emperor and senate of Rome, or to magistrates of public authority and great distinction in the Roman empire. Now it is incredible that such writers would have made such appeals, especially to the very persons in whose custody these documents were, had they not been fully satisfied of their existence and contents. Nor can there be any doubt that it was from this source that Suetonius and Tacitus (whose testimonies follow this paragraph) derived their knowledge of Christ and of Christians; just as modern historians obtain their materials from state-paper offices and government archives. Modern infidels, indeed, have affected to sneer at these appeals of Justin, Tertullian, and Eusebius to the Acts of Pilate in the Roman archives; but it is important to remark, that these appeals were never contradicted by the heathen infidels of the first four centuries, Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian. "Celsus attempted an elaborate confutation of the new faith, and published his treatise about A.D. 175, thirty-five years after the appearance of Justin Martyr's first Apology. The Pagan unbeliever had the Christian work before him, and must have studied it diligently, page by page, and sentence by sentence. Why did not the learned and vindictive Celsus meet and contradict the bold appeal of Justin Martyr to 'the Acts written in the time of Pontius Pilate?' He did not, because he dared not. By such contradiction he would have come into direct collision with the public records of the empire.

"About the year 270, and a little more than seventy years after the

the Gospel, in its infancy, without molestation; while both he and Chrysostom consider the remarkable refusal of the Roman senate to deify Christ, as equally owing to the control of Divine Providence, in order that the Divinity of Christ might be established, not by human authority, but by the mighty power of God; and that Jesus might not be ranked or associated among the many infamous characters who were deified by the Romans. Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 2. Chrysostom, Homil. 26. in 2 Cor. Op. tom. x. p. 624. A. The originals of all the preceding passages are given by Dr. Lardner, who has investigated the subjects of the Acts of Pilate, and his letter to Tiberius, with his accustomed minuteness and accuracy. See Heathen Testimonies, chap. ii. Works, vol. vii. pp. 231—244. 8vo.; or vol. iii. pp. 599—606. 4to. The same subject is also copiously treated by Vernet, in his Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tom. ix. pp. 283—354.

[1] Prof. Tischendorf (to whose learned labours sacred literature is most deeply indebted) has argued that, as all that we hear of the Acts of Pilate from Justin and Tertullian "coincides with what we find in a Christian forgery, known in later years as the Gospel of Nicodemus, but in early times" (as he thinks) "by the very name of the 'Acts of Pilate'" [he has printed these pretended Acts in pp. 266—300. of his "Evangelica Apocrypha," Lipsiæ, 1853], "it is reasonable to believe that this was the work alluded to by them." (Ibid. Prolegom. pp. lxii.—lxvi. Christian Observer, August, 1855. p. 565.) But this conjecture of the learned professor is not borne out by facts. There is no evidence to prove that Justin and Tertullian were actually possessed of these "Acts of Pilate;" on the contrary, as is shown above, they appealed to public documents in the archives of the Roman empire, which were in the custody of the enemies of Christianity, who neither could nor did gainsay or deny the fidelity and accuracy of their appeal. The conjecture, made by Prof. Tischendorf in the prolegomena to his "Evangelica Apocrypha," he subsequently traced more at length in an university thesis, entitled "Pilati circa Christum quid lucis afferatur ex Actis Pilati . . . scripsit Constantinus Tischendorf." Lipsiæ, 1855. 8vo. An epitome of this curious tract is given in the Christian Observer for August, 1855. pp. 565—567.

publication of Tertullian's Apology, heathen infidelity, personified by Porphyry, one of its most renowned champions, made its second great effort to write down the faith of the cross. Open before the eyes of Porphyry lay the writings of the two Christian apologists: his ears he could not close to the challenge of Tertullian,—'Search YOUR OWN commentaries' (or public records). How overwhelming must have been the triumph of the Pagan combatant, could he have averred and shown that the imperial archives contained not the pretended report from the procurator of Judæa! How would the Christian world have been humbled and confounded, as it gazed on the public immolation of its two favourite advocates by infidel hands, not as martyrs to the truth, but as fabricators of falsehood! Yet, upon the pressing emergency, the wary Porphyry stood speechless as the grave.

"In the fourth century, and about fifty years after Eusebius had reiterated the standing appeal of evangelical antiquity to Pilate's official report of the crucifixion, the apostate Julian brandished his imperial pen against the new religion. He was an accomplished scholar and a profound statesman. His own experience had impressed on his mind the ancient and universal usage of the empire, requiring from governors of provinces official reports of such extraordinary events as marked their administrations. He had before him the works of Justin Martyr, of Tertullian, and of Eusebius. He could not be ignorant that the appeal of the faithful to the report of Pontius Pilate had been sounded, and echoed and reverberated along the track of centuries. He must have felt the pressure of the appeal. Yet even the emperor Julian passed over, in ominous silence, the subject of that memorable letter from the governor of Judæa to his imperial master; which, unless subtracted by Pagan cunning, still survived — a speaking witness from his own archives."

Moreover, "it is a principle of universal justice, that, if a party rightfully demands the production of a document in the possession of his adversary, its non-production creates a decisive presumption against the party withholding it; for its suppression must have been prompted by views incompatible with truth. This principle strongly recommends itself to the common sense of mankind. The official report of the crucifixion, transmitted by Pilate to Tiberius, was a document perhaps decisive of the great controversy between Christianity and unbelief. It was in the hostile custody of heathen Rome, who ought to have held it for the common benefit of all her subjects. The advocates of primitive Christianity appealed to the document and demanded its production; they named the place of its custody, and stated its momentous contents. The champions of Paganism remained dumb as the idols they worshipped. This silence, continued for centuries, was a virtual confession that the Christian asseverations of the existence and contents of the document were 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.'"[1]

(2.) SUETONIUS, a Roman historian who flourished in the reign of the emperor Trajan, A.D. 116, refers to Christ, when he says that "Claudius Cæsar expelled the Jews from Rome, because they raised

[1] Griffin's Gospel its own Advocate, pp. 31—34. New York, 1850. 8vo.

continual tumults at the instigation of Christ,"[1] who (it is well known) was sometimes called Chrestus, and his disciples Chrestians.[2] This event took place A. D. 52, within *twenty* years after the crucifixion.

(3.) TACITUS, the historian, who also flourished under Trajan, A. D. 110, when writing the history of Nero (Claudius's successor), and speaking of the Christians, A. D. 64, says that "the author of that" (sect or) "name was Christus, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was punished with death, as a criminal, by the procurator Pontius Pilate."[3] And,

(4.) The younger PLINY, in his celebrated letter to Trajan, written A. D. 107, says that Jesus was worshipped by his followers as God.— "They sing among themselves, alternately, a hymn to Christ as to God."[4]

(5.) The historian ÆLIUS LAMPRIDIUS relates, that the emperor Alexander Severus (who reigned from A. D. 222 to 235), had two private chapels, one more honourable than the other; and that in the former "were the deified emperors, and also some eminently good men, and among them Apollonius, and, as a writer of his time says, *Christ*, Abraham, and Orpheus (whom he considered as deities), and the images of his ancestors."[5] The same historian adds, that the emperor "wished to erect a temple to Christ, and to receive him among the gods. But he was forbidden by those who consulted the oracles, they having found that, if that was done, all men would become Christians, and the other temples be forsaken."[6]

(6.) CELSUS, one of the bitterest antagonists of Christianity, who

[1] Judæos, impulsore Chresto, assidue tumultuantes Româ expulit. Suetonius, in Claudio, c. 25. Though the Jews alone are mentioned by the historian, yet, from the nature of the thing, we understand that Christians were comprehended in it; for the first professors of Christianity being of the *Jewish nation* were for some time confounded with the disciples of Moses, and participated in all the hardships that were imposed on them. Accordingly, in Acts xviii. 2. we read of Aquila and Priscilla, two Jewish Christians, who had been banished from Rome by the above-mentioned edict of Claudius. The historian attributes the tumults of the Jews in that city to the instigation of Christ; but the true state of the affair was this:—The admission of the Gentiles into the Christian church without subjecting them to the institutions of Moses giving great offence to the Judaising Christians at Rome, they joined their unbelieving brethren in opposing, not only the Gentile converts, but also such of their own nation as espoused their cause. Of all nations, the Jews were the most fierce and obstinate in their religious disputes; and the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles was particularly offensive to them. In Asia Minor and in Greece they opposed it by main force, as we learn from Acts xvi.—xviii.; whence it is highly probable that in this quarrel they proceeded to similar outrages at Rome also. Macknight's Credibility of the Gospel History, p. 300. The decree above noticed, which was issued, not by the *senate*, but by the emperor Claudius himself, continued in force only during his life, if so long; for, in no long time after this, Rome abounded again with Jews.

[2] Perperam *Chrestianus* pronunciatur à vobis. Tertullian, Apol. c. 3. Sed exponenda hujus nominis ratio est, propter ignorantium errorem, qui cum immutatâ literâ *Chrestum* solent dicere. Lactantius, Instit. Divin. lib. iv. c. 7. Lucian, or the author of the dialogue entitled Philopatris, which is ascribed to him, also calls Jesus, *Chrestus*. Lardner, vol. viii. p. 78. 8vo.; or vol. iv. p. 154. 4to.

[3] Auctor nominis ejus Christus, qui Tiberio imperante per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat. Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. c. 44.

[4] Carmenque Christo, quasi Deo, dicere secum invicem. Plin. Epist. lib. x. ep. 97. tom. ii. p. 128. edit. Bipont.

[5] Lampridius, in vitâ Severi, c. 29. apud Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores, vol. i. p. 278. edit. Bipont.

[6] Ibid. c. 43. vol. i. p. 290.

wrote in the latter part of the second century, speaks of the founder of the Christian religion as having lived but a very few years before his time, and mentions the principal facts of the Gospel history relative to Jesus Christ,—declaring that he had copied the account from the writings of the evangelists. He quotes these books (as we have already had occasion to remark[1]), and makes extracts from them as being composed by the disciples and companions of Jesus, and under the names which they now bear. He takes notice particularly of his incarnation; his being born of a virgin; his being worshipped by the magi; his flight into Egypt, and the slaughter of the infants. He speaks of Christ's baptism by John, of the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, and of the voice from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God; of his being accounted a prophet by his disciples; of his foretelling who should betray him, as well as the circumstances of his death and resurrection. He allows that Christ was considered as a divine person by his disciples, who worshipped him; and notices all the circumstances attending the crucifixion of Christ, and his appearing to his disciples afterwards. He frequently alludes to the Holy Spirit, mentions God under the title of the Most High, and speaks collectively of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He acknowledges the miracles wrought by Jesus Christ, by which he engaged great multitudes to adhere to him as the Messiah. That these miracles were really performed he NEVER disputes or denies, but ascribes them to the magic art, which (he says) Christ learned in Egypt.[2]

(7.) PORPHYRY, another learned antagonist of Christianity (perhaps the most learned and acute antagonist Christianity ever had), who flourished about a century after Celsus, has also borne evidence to the genuineness of the books received by the Christians[3]: and his testimony is all the more valuable from the fact that he conversed with Christians at Tyre, in Sicily, and at Rome. Porphyry not only allowed that there was such a person as Jesus Christ, but also honoured him as a pious person, who was conveyed into heaven, as being approved by the gods."[4]

(8.) About the middle of the fourth century reigned the emperor JULIAN. It is a remarkable fact, that this very learned and inveterate enemy of the Christian name and faith could produce *no* counter evidence in refutation of the truth of the evangelical history, though (as we have already seen[5]) he attests the genuineness and early date of the four Gospels; and that he never attempted to deny the reality of Christ's miracles. Jesus, he says, did nothing worthy of fame, unless any one can suppose that curing the lame and the blind, and exorcising demons in the villages of Bethsaida, are some of the greatest works. He acknowledges that Jesus had a sovereign power over impure spirits; that he walked on the surface of the deep, and expelled demons. He endeavours to depreciate these wonderful

[1] See pp. 88—90. *suprà.*
[2] Lardner's Heathen Testimonies, chap. xviii. Works, vol. viii. pp. 5—69. 8vo.; or vol. iv. pp. 113—149. 4to.
[3] See pp. 90, 91. *suprà.*
[4] Lardner's Heathen Testimonies, chap. xxxvii. Works, vol. viii. pp. 176—248. 8vo.; or vol. iv. pp. 209—250. 4to.
[5] See pp. 91, 92. *suprà.*

works, but in vain. The consequence is undeniable; such works are good proofs of a divine mission."[1]

(9.) Lastly, — to omit the very numerous intervening testimonies that might be adduced,—MOHAMMED (who lived in the latter end of the fifth and the former part of the sixth century), though he assumed the honour of delivering to mankind a new revelation, expressly acknowledged the authority of the Gospels. He speaks of Jesus Christ and of his mother by their names, and calls him the Word of God. He says, that he was miraculously born of a virgin; acknowledges the truth of his miracles and prophecies; and speaks of his death and ascension, of his apostles, of the unbelief of the Jews, of Zecharias the father of John the Baptist, and of the Baptist himself, describing his character in a manner perfectly conformable to the Gospels.[2]

2. TESTIMONIES OF HEATHEN ADVERSARIES TO THE LIVES AND CHARACTERS OF THE FIRST CHRISTIANS.

(1.) The first persecution of the Christians was raised by the emperor Nero, A. D. 65, that is, about thirty years after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Concerning this persecution, we have the testimonies of two Roman historians, Tacitus and Suetonius.

TACITUS was contemporary with the apostles. Relating the great fire at Rome, in the tenth year of Nero's reign, he says, that the people imputed that calamity to the emperor, who (they imagined) had set fire to the city, that he might have the glory of rebuilding it more magnificently, and of calling it after his own name; but that Nero charged the crime on the Christians, and, in order to give the more plausible colour to this calumny, he put great numbers of them to death in the most cruel manner. With the view of conciliating the people, he expended great sums in adorning the city, he bestowed largesses on those who had suffered by the fire, and offered many expiatory sacrifices to appease the gods. The historian's words are: — "But neither human assistance, nor the largesses of the emperor, nor all the atonements offered to the gods availed: the infamy of that horrible transaction still adhered to him. To suppress, if possible, this common rumour, Nero procured others to be accused, and punished with exquisite tortures a race of men detested for their evil practices, who were commonly known by the name of Christians. The author of that sect (or name) was Christus, who in the reign of Tiberius was punished with death, as a criminal, by the procurator Pontius Pilate. But this pestilent superstition, though checked for a while, broke out afresh, not only in Judæa, where the evil first originated, but even in the city (of Rome), the common sink into which every thing filthy and abominable flows from all quarters of the world. At first those only were apprehended who confessed themselves of that sect; afterwards a *vast multitude* discovered by them; all of whom were condemned, not so much for the crime of burning the city as for their enmity to mankind. Their executions were so contrived as to expose them to derision and contempt. Some were

[1] Lardner's Heath. Test. chap. xlvi. Works, vol. viii. pp. 355—423. 8vo.; or vol. iv. pp. 311—348. 4to.

[2] See the Koran, chapters 3, 4, 5, 6. 19. Dr. Macknight has collected and inserted the passages at length in his Credibility of the Gospel History, pp. 340, 341.

covered over with the skins of wild beasts, that they might be torn to pieces by dogs; some were crucified; while others, having been daubed over with combustible materials, were set up as lights in the night-time, and thus burnt to death. For these spectacles Nero gave his own gardens, and, at the same time, exhibited there the diversions of the circus; sometimes standing in the crowd as a spectator, in the habit of a charioteer, and at other times driving a chariot himself; until at length these men, though really criminal and deserving exemplary punishment, began to be commiserated as people who were destroyed, not out of regard to the public welfare, but only to gratify the cruelty of one man."[1]

The testimony which SUETONIUS bears to this persecution is in the following words: — "The Christians likewise were severely punished, — a sort of people addicted to a new and mischievous superstition."[2]

The preceding accounts of the persecution of the Christians by Nero are further confirmed by Martial, the epigrammatist (who lived at the close of the first century), and by Juvenal, the satirist (who flourished during the reigns of Domitian, Nerva, Trajan, and Adrian), both of whom allude to the Neronian persecution, and especially to the pitched coat in which the Christians were burnt.

Martial has an epigram, of which the following is a literal translation: — "You have, perhaps, lately seen acted on the theatre, Mucius, who thrust his hand into the fire: if you think such a person patient, valiant, stout, you are a senseless dotard. For it is a much greater thing, when threatened *with the troublesome coat*, to say, 'I do not sacrifice,' than to obey the command, 'Burn the hand.'"[3] This troublesome coat or shirt of the Christians was made like a sack, of paper or coarse linen cloth, either besmeared with pitch, wax, or sulphur, and similar combustible materials, or dipped in them: it was then put upon the Christians; and, in order that they might be kept upright, — the better to resemble a flaming torch, — their chins were severally fastened to stakes fixed in the ground.[4]

In his first satire, Juvenal has the following allusion: —

Now dare
To glance at Tigellinus, and you glare
In that pitch'd shirt in which such crowds expire,
Chain'd to the bloody stake, and wrapp'd in fire."[5]

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[1] Tacitus, Annal. lib. xv. c. 44. Lardner's Heathen Testimonies, chap. v. Works, vol. vii. pp. 251—259. 8vo.; or vol. iii. pp. 610—614. 4to.

[2] Seutonius in Nerone, c. xvi. Lardner, chap. viii. Works, vol. vii. pp. 265—272. 8vo.; or vol. iii. pp. 618—622. 4to.

[3] In matutina nuper spectatus arena
Mucius, imposuit qui sua membra focis,
Si patiens fortisque tibi durusque videtur,
Abderitanæ pectora plebis habes.
Nam cum dictatur, *tunicâ præsente molestâ*,
"Ure manum," plus est dicere: "Non facio." Martial lib. x. epigr. 25.

[4] Lardner, chap. vi. Works, vol. vii. pp. 260—262. 8vo.; or vol. iii. pp. 615, 616. 4to.

[5] Mr. Gifford's translation, p. 27. The original passage is thus: —
Pone Tigellinum, tædâ lucebis in illâ,
Quâ stantes ardent, qui fixo gutture fumant,
Et latum mediâ sulcum deducit arenâ. Juven. Sat. lib. i. 155—157.

Or more literally,—"Describe a great villain, such as was Tigellinus" (a corrupt minister under Nero), "and you shall suffer the same punishment with those who stand burning in their own flame and smoke, their head being held up by a stake fixed to a chain, till they make a long stream" (of blood and fluid sulphur) "on the ground."[1]

The above cited testimony of Tacitus, corroborated as it is by contemporary writers, is a very important confirmation of the evangelical history. In it the historian asserts, 1. That Jesus Christ really lived and taught, and was put to death as a malefactor by Pontius Pilate, procurator under Tiberius; 2. That from Christ the people called Christians derived their name and religious sentiments; 3. That this religion or superstition (as he terms it) had its rise in Judæa, where it also spread, notwithstanding the ignominious death of its founder, and the opposition which his followers afterwards experienced from the people of that country; 4. That it was propagated from Judæa into other parts of the world as far as Rome, where, in the tenth or eleventh year of Nero, and before that time, the Christians were very numerous[2]; and, 5. That the professors of this religion were reproached and hated, and underwent many and grievous sufferings.[3]

(2.) The next testimony to be adduced is that of Caius Plinius Cæcilius Secundus, better known by the name of the *younger* PLINY. He was born A. D. 61 or 62; and, after holding various distinguished offices, was sent to the provinces of Pontus and Bithynia, by the emperor Trajan, A. D. 106—108, as his lieutenant and proprætor, with proconsular power. The persecution of the Christians under that emperor had commenced A. D. 100; and in that remote country there

[1] Lardner, ch. vii. Works, vol. vii. pp. 262—265 8vo.; or vol. iii. pp. 616—618. 4to.

[2] The expression of Tacitus is, *ingens multitudo*, a *vast multitude*; which Voltaire, with his accustomed disregard of truth, has represented as only a few poor wretches, who were sacrificed to public vengeance. Essay on History, vol. i. ch. v. p. 60. Nugent's translation. Dr. Macknight has completely exposed the falsehood of that profligate writer, in his Credibility of the Gospel History, pp. 300—302. Mr. Gibbon's false translation and misrepresentations of the passage of Tacitus above cited are ably exposed in the appendix to Bishop Watson's Apology for the Bible, addressed to the historian. The testimony of Tacitus to the vast number of Christians at Rome is now confirmed by the evidence of the catacombs there, which "are calculated to extend over nine hundred miles of streets, and to contain almost seven millions of graves!" . . . . . "And we may regard it as established beyond all reasonable doubt, that in spite of the general contempt and hatred, in spite of the constant ill usage to which they were exposed, and the occasional 'fiery trials' which proved them, the Christians, as early as the second century, formed one of the chief elements in the population of Rome." Rawlinson's Bampton Lecture for 1859, pp. 284-5.

[3] On the above-cited passage of Tacitus, Gibbon has the following remark:—"*The most sceptical criticism is obliged to respect the* TRUTH *of this extraordinary fact* (the persecution of the Christians under Nero), AND THE INTEGRITY OF THIS CELEBRATED PASSAGE OF TACITUS. *The* FORMER (its truth) *is confirmed by the diligent and accurate Suetonius, who mentions the punishment which Nero inflicted upon the Christians. The* LATTER (its integrity and genuineness) *may be* PROVED *by the consent of the most ancient manuscripts; by the inimitable character of Tacitus; by his reputation, which guarded his text from the interpolations of pious fraud; and by the purport of his narration.*" (Decline and Fall, vol. ii. pp. 407, 408.) Such is the observation of the elegant and learned historian, whose hatred of Christianity has led him, in other parts of his work, to misrepresent both it and the Christians: yet, in defiance of all historical and critical testimony, a modern opposer of revelation affirmed that "the texts which are to be found in the works of Tacitus are too much suspected of interpolations to be adduced as an authority!" The effrontery of this assertion is only surpassed by the wilful ignorance which it exhibits, especially as the writer alluded to reprinted Gibbon's misrepresentations of Christians and Christianity in a cheap form in order to deceive and mislead the unwary.—The reader who is desirous of prosecuting this subject further will find the historical testimonies of Tacitus and Suetonius completely vindicated in p. 352. *et seq.* of Mr. W. A. Hails's "Remarks on Volney's Ruins" (London, 1825, 8vo.); a learned and ably written treatise, in which the sophistry and false assertions of that most insidious and dangerous of infidel writers is fully and satisfactorily refuted.

were at this time prodigious numbers of Christians, against whom Pliny, by the emperor's edict, was obliged to use all manner of severity. Being, however, a person of good sense and moderation, he judged it prudent not to proceed to the extreme rigour of the law until he had represented the case to Trajan, and had received his commands concerning it. He therefore wrote him the following epistle[1], A. D. 107 (which is too important to be abridged), and in the same year received the emperor's rescript. The authenticity of both these documents is admitted by the sceptical historian Gibbon.[2]

"Pliny, to the emperor Trajan, wisheth health and happiness:—

"It is my constant custom, sir, to refer myself to you in all matters concerning which I have any doubt. For who can better direct me where I hesitate, or instruct me where I am ignorant? I have never been present at any trials of Christians, so that I know not well what is the subject-matter of punishment or of inquiry, or what strictness ought to be used in either. Nor have I been a little perplexed to determine whether any difference ought to be made upon account of age, or whether the young and tender, and the full grown and robust, ought to be treated all alike; whether repentance should entitle to pardon, or whether all who have once been Christians ought to be punished, though they are now no longer so; whether the name itself, although no crimes be detected, or crimes only belonging to the name, ought to be punished. Concerning all these things I am in doubt.

"In the mean time I have taken this course with all who have been brought before me, and have been accused as Christians. I have put the question to them, Whether they were Christians. Upon their confessing to me that they were, I repeated the question a second and a third time, threatening also to punish them with death. Such as still persisted, I ordered away to be punished; for it was no doubt with me, whatever might be the nature of their opinion, that contumacy and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished. There were others of the same infatuation, whom, because they are Roman citizens, I have noted down to be sent to the city.

"In a short time, the crime spreading itself, even whilst under persecution, as is usual in such cases, divers sorts of people came in my way. An information was presented to me, without mentioning the author, containing the names of many persons, who, upon examination, denied that they were Christians, or had ever been so; who repeated after me an invocation of the gods, and with wine and frankincense made supplication to your image, which, for that purpose, I had caused to be brought and set before them, together with the statues of the deities. Moreover, they reviled the name of Christ, none of which things, as is said, they who are really Christians can by any means be compelled to do. These, therefore, I thought

[1] Pliny, Epist. lib. x. ep. 97. tom. ii. pp. 127—129. edit. Bipont. It is reprinted by Dr. Lardner, whose translation we have given, and who has illustrated both the epistle of the philosopher and the emperor Trajan's rescript with numerous valuable observations. Heathen Testimonies, chap. ix. Works, vol. vii. pp. 287—344. 8vo.; or vol. iv. pp. 10—43. 4to.

[2] Decline and Fall, vol. ii. p.409

proper to discharge. Others were named by an informer, who at first confessed themselves Christians, and afterwards denied it; the rest said they had been Christians, but had left them, — some three years ago, some longer, and one or more above twenty years. They all worshipped your image, and the statues of the gods; these also reviled Christ. *They affirmed that the whole of their fault or error lay in this, that they were wont to meet together, on a stated day, before it was light, and sing among themselves, alternately, a hymn to Christ as God; and to bind themselves by a solemn oath* (sacramento), *not to the commission of any wickedness, but not to be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them, when called upon to return it. When these things were performed, it was their custom to separate, and then come together again to a meal, which they ate in common, without any disorder; but this they had forborne since the publication of my edict, by which, according to your commands, I prohibited assemblies.*

"After receiving this account, I judged it the more necessary to examine, and that by torture, two maid-servants, which were called ministers. But I have discovered nothing beside an evil and excessive superstition. Suspending therefore all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice; for it has appeared unto me a matter highly deserving consideration, especially *upon account of the great number of persons who are in danger of suffering; for many of all ages, and every rank, of both sexes likewise, are accused, and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country.* Nevertheless, it seems to me that it may be restrained and corrected. It is certain that the temples, which were almost forsaken, begin to be more frequented; and the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are revived. Victims likewise are every where bought up, whereas for some time there were few purchasers. Whence it is easy to imagine what numbers of men might be reclaimed, if pardon were granted to those who shall repent."

To the preceding letter, the emperor Trajan sent the following reply: —

"Trajan to Pliny, wisheth health and happiness: —

"You have taken the right method, my Pliny, in your proceedings with those who have been brought before you as Christians; for it is impossible to establish any one rule that shall hold universally. They are not to be sought for. If any are brought before you, and are convicted, they ought to be punished. However, he that denies his being a Christian, and makes it evident in fact, that is, by supplicating to our gods, though he be suspected to have been so formerly, let him be pardoned upon repentance. But in no case, of any crime whatever, may a bill of information be received, without being signed by him who presents it; for that would be a dangerous precedent, and unworthy of my government."

The preceding letter and rescript furnish numerous important testimonies to the state of Christianity, and to the purity of Christian principles. We learn from it, in the FIRST place, the great

progress of the Christian religion in a short space of time. Christianity was neither known nor heard of in the world before the reign of Tiberius. Eighty years had not elapsed since the crucifixion of Jesus, when Pliny wrote this letter, nor seventy years since the disciples of Jesus began to make any mention of him to the Gentiles; and yet there were at this time great numbers of men whom Pliny repeatedly terms Christians, in that part of Asia where he presided, at a great distance from Judæa. Christians there were every where, throughout the whole extent of his province, in cities, in villages, and in the open country. Among them were persons of all ages, of every rank and condition, and of both sexes; and some of them also were citizens of Rome. The prevalence of Christianity appears likewise from the universal decay of pagan worship: the temples were deserted, and the sacrifices discontinued. Beasts, brought to market for victims, had few purchasers. So many were accused, and were in danger of suffering on account of the prevalence of this opinion, as gave the president no small concern. Further, it is evident that there were not only many at this time, who bore the Christian name, but that such people had been there for many years; some, for several years; and one or more, who had been brought before Pliny, had professed Christianity, and had renounced it more than twenty years. All which circumstances prove that Christianity had been planted there for many years before his arrival. Such an increase, indeed, could only be the work of time.—*SECONDLY*, Pliny's letter bears a noble testimony to the fortitude of the Christians in suffering, and to their steady perseverance in the faith of Jesus Christ; and it also communicates several interesting particulars relative to their religious belief and worship. More particularly, 1. They disowned all the gods of the heathens, and would not worship the images of the emperors or of their gods. The people who embraced this religion forsook the heathen temples and altars, and offered no sacrifices there. 2. They assembled together on a stated day, which we know from the collateral testimony of Christian writers was the Lord's Day or Sunday, on which day Christians celebrate the weekly festival of Christ's resurrection. 3. When they were assembled, Pliny says that they sang a hymn to Christ as God; and also engaged themselves, "by an oath, not to commit theft, or robbery, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them." This account is highly to the honour of the first Christians. They paid divine worship to their God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and devoted themselves to the practice of moral virtue.—*LASTLY*, both the epistle of Pliny, and the letter or rescript of Trajan, attest the innocence and virtue of the first Christians. From the former it is evident that no crime, besides that of their religion, was proved against any of those who were brought before Pliny. Even their accusers and prosecutors alleged nothing else against them, but that they were Christians: he examined apostates; he put to the torture two young women who were ministers or deaconesses, and yet he discovered nothing but what was quite harmless. The only charge against them is an absurd superstition, and obstinacy in adhering to

it. Trajan's rescript affords equally strong proof of the innocence of these men. He knew not of any offence of which they were guilty, excepting only that they did not supplicate the heathen deities. The honesty and innocency of these men oblige us to pay a great regard to their belief and profession of the Christian religion. If they were sober and discreet before they embraced it, we may be sure that there *then* were such evidences of its truth as approved themselves to serious persons. If they are supposed to have formerly been vicious and irregular, here is a strong proof of the truth and goodness of Christianity, inasmuch as it had so great an influence on the minds of men, at a time when they might easily know whether it was well grounded or not. In either case, it is an honour to these principles, that those who embraced them maintained such innocence in their lives, that their enemies, even after the strictest inquiries, could discover nothing criminal against them.

(3.) A.D. 176. CELSUS ridicules the Christians for their worship of Christ, and attests the gradual increase of their numbers. He also acknowledges that there were modest, temperate, and intelligent persons among them [1], and bears witness to their constancy in the faith of Christ. At the very time when he wrote against them, they were suffering a grievous persecution, but were enabled to withstand both his sharp-pointed pen, and also the sword of the magistrate.[2]

(4.) LUCIAN, the contemporary of Celsus, was a bitter enemy of the Christians. In his account of the death of the philosopher Peregrinus, he bears authentic testimony to the principal facts and principles of Christianity; that its founder was crucified in Palestine, and worshipped by the Christians, who entertained peculiarly strong hopes of immortal life, and great contempt for this world and its enjoyments; and that they courageously endured many afflictions on account of their principles, and sometimes surrendered themselves to sufferings. Honesty and probity prevailed so much among them, that they trusted each other without security. Their Master had earnestly recommended to all his followers mutual love, by which also they were much distinguished. In his piece, entitled Alexander or Pseudomantis, he says, that they were well known in the world by the name of Christians; that they were at that time numerous in Pontus, Paphlagonia, and the neighbouring countries; and, finally, that they were formidable to cheats and impostors. And in the dialogue entitled Philopatris (which if not written by Lucian himself, to whom it is usually ascribed, was composed not long after his time), there are numerous allusions to the writings, principles, and practices of Christians, all of which are ridiculed, and especially their belief of the doctrine of the Trinity.[3]

(5.) The fortitude and constancy of the Christians under persecution are referred to by EPICTETUS (A. D. 109), under the name of

[1] Vide Origen, contra Celsum, lib. i. p. 22. edit. Cantab. 1677.

[2] Lardner's Heathen Testimonies, ch. xviii. sections 5—8. Works, vol. viii. pp. 36—50. 8vo.; or vol. iv. pp. 130—138. 4to.

[3] Ibid. chap. xix. Works, vol. viii. pp. 69—81. 8vo.; or vol. iv. pp. 149—156. 4to.

Galilæans.[1] The emperor MARCUS ANTONINUS (A. D. 161) mentions the Christians as examples of an obstinate contempt of death.[2] And GALEN (A. D. 200) acknowledges the constancy of Christians in their principles.[3] PORPHYRY (A. D. 270) acknowledges that they were then very numerous in the Roman empire, and unwillingly admits the miracles wrought by the apostles, which, however, he ascribes to the magic art; and he endeavoured to expose them to popular reproach by insinuating that they were the causes of the calamities that befell the Roman empire.[4]

(6.) Lastly, the emperor JULIAN (A. D. 361), though he endeavours to lessen the number of the early believers in Jesus, yet is constrained to acknowledge that there were multitudes of such men in Greece and Italy before John wrote his Gospel, and that they were not confined to the lower classes; men of character — such as Cornelius, a Roman centurion, at Cæsarea, and Sergius Paulus, proconsul of Cyprus, — being converted to the faith of Jesus before the end of Claudius's reign (who ascended the imperial throne A. D. 41, and died A. D. 54); and he frequently speaks, with much indignation, of Peter and Paul, those two great apostles of Jesus, and successful preachers of his Gospel. So that, upon the whole, the apostate emperor Julian has undesignedly borne testimony to the truth of many things recorded in the New Testament. He *aimed* to overthrow the Christian religion, but has CONFIRMED it; his arguments against it are perfectly harmless, and insufficient to unsettle the weakest Christian; for he has not made one objection of moment against the Christian religion, as contained in the genuine and authentic books of the New Testament.[5]

VI. Thus do all the inveterate enemies of Christianity, — from its first origin to its complete establishment in the then known world, in the fourth century of the Christian æra, — unite in giving an honourable testimony to the character of Christ, the reality of his miracles, to the genuineness, authenticity, and credibility of the writings of the New Testament, and to the wide and rapid progress of the Christian religion, as well as to the unity of the objects of the Christian faith and worship, the blameless lives of the Christians, and their unshaken constancy in adhering to their holy profession, regardless of the most sanguinary and exquisite torments that could be inflicted on them. It is true that, concerning many important articles of Scripture history, the Greek and Latin writers now extant are totally silent; and hence some have attempted to raise an argument against the credibility of this history. But the silence of the writers in

[1] Lardner's Heathen Testimonies, chap. x. Works, vol. vii. pp. 344—357. 8vo.; or vol. iv. pp. 43—50. 4to.

[2] Ibid. chap. xv. § 2 Works, vol. vii. pp. 398—406. 8vo.; or vol. iv. pp. 73—78. 4to.

[3] Ibid. chap. xxi. Works, vol. viii. pp. 90, 91. 8vo.; or vol. iv. p. 161. 4to.

[4] Ibid. chap. xxxvii. Works, vol. viii. pp. 220—226. 8vo.; or vol. iv. pp. 234—238. 4to.

[5] Ibid. chap. xlvi. Works, vol. viii. pp. 394—411. 8vo.; or vol. iv. pp. 332—342. 4to. The infidel historian of declining Rome has attested the accuracy of the passages collected by Dr. Lardner from the apostate emperor, by affirming that Dr. Lardner has "accurately compiled all that can now be discovered of Julian's work against the Christians." Decline and Fall, vol. iv. p. 81. note g. Herwerden, de Imperatore Juliano, pp. 114—131. Lugd. Bat. 1827, 8vo.

question may be satisfactorily accounted for, by their great ignorance of such facts as occurred very long before their own time, and by the peculiar contempt entertained for both Jews and Christians, arising from the diversity of their customs and institutions. To these general considerations we may add, particularly with reference to the silence of profane historians relative to the remarkable events in the life of Christ, —

1. That *many books of those remote ages are* LOST, *in which it is very possible that some mention might have been made of these facts.*

Hence it has happened that many occurrences, which are related in the evangelical history, are not to be found in the writings of the heathens. Of these writings, indeed, we have now but few remaining in comparison of their original number; and those which are extant are only fragments of preceding histories. Thus, the mighty works performed by Jesus Christ, and the monuments of the great achievements that took place in the age when he was born, are now missing or lost. All the history of Dion Cassius, from the consulships of Antistius and Balbus to the consulships of Messala and Cinna (that is, for the space of ten years, — five years before and five years after the birth of Christ), is totally lost, as also is Livy's history of the same period. In vain, therefore, does any one expect to find the remarkable passages concerning the birth of Christ in these writers; and much more vain is it to look for these things in those writers whose histories are altogether missing at this day. To instance only the census or enrolment ordered by Augustus, and mentioned by Luke (ii. 1, 2.), the silence of historians concerning which has been a favourite topic with objectors: — there can be no doubt but that some one of the Roman historians did record that transaction (for the Romans have sedulously recorded every thing that was connected with the grandeur and riches of their empire); though their writings are now lost, either by negligence, by fire, by the irruption of the barbarous nations into Italy, or by age and length of time. It is evident that some *one* historian *did mention* the census above alluded to; otherwise, whence did Suidas derive information of the *fact*, — that Augustus sent TWENTY SELECT MEN, of acknowledged character for virtue and integrity, into ALL the provinces of the empire, to take a census both of men and of property, and commanded that a just proportion of the latter should be brought into the imperial treasury? And *this*, Suidas adds, *was the* FIRST *census.*[1]

2. *Some of the Roman historians, whose works have come down to our time, are* DEFECTIVE.

This is particularly the case with Livy and Tacitus, from whom we cannot expect any narrative of events that have reference to the birth of Christ, or to any great occurrence that took place at that time. For Livy wrote only to the commencement of Augustus's reign, which was *before* the time of Christ; consequently he could not record so memorable an event as that of a census throughout the Roman empire, which did not take place until the *thirtieth* year of Augustus's reign. And no notice *could* be taken of that transaction by Tacitus, because he does not go so far back as Augustus. His *Annals* begin with the reign of Tiberius, and continue to the death of Nero: his books of *History* begin where the Annals terminate, and conclude with Vespasian's expedition against the Jews. For the knowledge of the transactions intervening between the close of Livy and the commencement of Tacitus, we are indebted to Velleius Paterculus, Florus, Plutarch, Dion Cassius, Justin, and others, who lived *long after* the time of Augustus, and who compiled their histories from such materials as they could command. Florus, in particular, is only an abbreviator of Livy, from whom little consequently can be expected. Though Velleius Paterculus advances a little further, yet he is merely an epitomiser; and as Justin, who flourished in the reign of the emperor Antoninus Pius, only abridged the history of Trogus Pompeius, which he did not continue, we

[1] Suidæ Lexicon, voce Απογραφη, tom. i. p. 271. edit. Kuster.

cannot, therefore, expect any information from him relative to the birth of Christ. Appian has altogether omitted Judæa in the description which he has left us of the Roman empire. These facts will account for the silence of the generality of pagan writers concerning the events related in the Gospel history; while the express, authentic, and genuine statement of Tacitus, already given[1], furnishes an indisputable testimony to the fact, that Jesus Christ lived and was crucified during the reign of Tiberius, and thus completely refutes the absurd and ignorant assertion (an assertion, indeed, so truly absurd as to be unworthy of notice, were it not that its effrontery may impose on the unwary) which has been made, viz. that it is not known at what year between A.D. 60 and 100 the name of Christ was first heard of in Europe, and in that part of Asia which is contiguous to Europe and the Mediterranean Sea; and that it is evident from all existing testimony that it was not before the year 60!!!

3. *Of the few remaining historians, who wrote about the ages in question, most were engaged on other subjects; to which it is to be added, that no profane historians, whether Jews or Heathens, take notice of* ALL *occurrences.*

Thus the obscurity of the sun at Julius Cæsar's death, which is said to have lasted a whole year, is not noticed by any Roman author except the poets Ovid and Virgil, and the philosopher Pliny: yet ten historians or more, in the *following* century, wrote lives of Cæsar, and gave an account of his assassination and of several things that occurred after it. A similar prodigy is reported by Cedrenus to have happened in the reign of the emperor Justinian; but between that time and Cedrenus, there were nearly twenty considerable writers, who mentioned no such thing. Neither Tacitus, Justin, nor Strabo, who have particularly spoken of the Jews, have noticed the existence of the Jewish sect of the Essenes: nay, even Josephus, the Jewish historian, is totally silent concerning them in his two books against Apion, though he has mentioned them in his other writings. Yet, will any one pretend that there were no Essenes, either before or in the time of Christ? — Again, neither Herodotus, nor Thucydides, nor any other Greek writers of that time, have taken any notice of Rome, though the conquests of the Roman people were then extended far and wide, and the Romans were become great and formidable. Suetonius wrote the lives of the first twelve Roman emperors; yet if we compare his relations with the events recorded by other historians, we shall find that he has omitted many important transactions that were obvious. Now, to apply this to our present purpose: — it is true that none of the heathen historians of imperial Rome have spoken of the celebrated census in the time of Augustus, which is mentioned by Luke (ii. 1, 2.): yet it does not follow that it did not actually take effect, since we see it is not unusual for historians to pass by some persons and things, which are very remarkable and deserve to be recorded. If, then, some matters which are mentioned by the evangelists are not noticed in other histories, we cannot, with any reason, conclude from them, that the evangelists have recorded that which is false. No such thing can be inferred; for even among pagan writers there are many peculiar historical passages related by some of them concerning which the rest are totally silent. Tacitus and Valerius Maximus, for instance, have narrations which are not to be found in any other Roman historians, and yet they are not suspected of falsehood. Why, then, may we not credit those things which are recorded in the New Testament, although no Gentile historians make any the slightest mention of them? Nay, the evangelical historians themselves do not all relate the same things; though all of them have mentioned some passages, yet there are others which are noticed only by one or two of the evangelists; and there are some things or persons concerning which they are wholly silent, but which are as remarkable as some of those which they have committed to writing. Thus, the Gospels speak of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and also of the Galilæans and Herodians; and yet they take no notice whatever of the Essenes by name, though they were at that time a considerable sect among the Jews. It is no reasonable objection, therefore, to the New Testament, that some things occur in it which are not to be found in very approved authors. No history, whether sacred or profane,

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[1] See pp. 173. 175. *suprà.*

relates every thing. The evangelists themselves do not pretend to do this: we cannot, therefore, expect to find *all* the actions of Christ recorded in their writings, for one of them who wrote last of all thus expresses himself at the close of his Gospel:—*And there are many other things which Jesus did; the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.* (John xxi. 25.)

4. *Several of the facts, relating to Christ and his miracles, coming from Jews, would be slighted as fabulous by the Gentile writers,* especially considering, on the one hand, how common prodigies and magical stories were in that day; and on the other hand, how superstitious and credulous the Jews were reputed to be.

The scene of Christ's actions lay at a great distance from Greece and Italy, and authentic accounts of his miracles could not soon be transmitted thither: the learned Greeks and Romans, therefore, would regard the first reports of them as idle or incredible tales. Besides, it was foreign to the purpose of any author who wrote the life of a Roman emperor, or the history of a celebrated war, or the annals of a particular state, to describe minutely a religious sect, begun in Judæa by one who was rejected as a deceiver in his own country. Or, if his subject led such a writer to mention the Christian religion, its doctrines, miracles, and disciples, he would naturally speak of them in such a manner as he himself felt affected towards them; and in what sovereign contempt the first Christians were held, by the generality of profane writers, many of the passages adduced from their works, in the preceding pages, sufficiently attest. Lastly, the Christian scheme of doctrines and moral duties was so contrary to the received tenets and maxims of the heathen, that it cannot excite surprise that many of them cared but little to inquire into evidences and facts relating to it. Many, however, who *did* inquire, doubtless became Christians; their testimony, therefore, is not to be reckoned here.

One single example will illustrate the three last observations. The preternatural darkness of three hours, which prevailed in the land of Judæa at the time of Christ's crucifixion, and which has been recorded by three of the evangelists, is unnoticed by any profane historian; from which circumstance Mr. Gibbon took occasion to insinuate that the evidence of the evangelists is not sufficient to establish the truth of facts, unless it is supported by the concurrent testimony of pagan contemporary writers. Speaking of that darkness, he expresses his surprise that this miraculous event "*passed without notice in an age of science and history.* It happened," he adds, "during the lifetime of Seneca and the elder Pliny, who *must have experienced the immediate effects, or received the earliest intelligence of the prodigy.* Each of these philosophers, in a laborious work, has recorded *all the great phenomena of nature, earthquakes, meteors, comets, and eclipses, which his indefatigable industry could collect.* Both the one and the other have omitted to mention the greatest phenomenon to which mortal eye has been witness since the creation of the globe. *A distinct chapter of Pliny is devoted to eclipses of an extraordinary nature and unusual duration:* but he contents himself with describing the singular defect of light which followed the murder of Cæsar, when, during the greatest part of the year, the orb of the sun appeared pale and without splendour."[1] The sentences printed in italic are those in which the sceptical historian has had recourse to those misrepresentations which unhappily pervade too many of his splendid pages. On this passage we remark,

[1] Decline and Fall, vol. ii. pp. 379.

FIRST, That the eclipse being confined to Judæa, its *immediate effects* could not *necessarily* have been experienced by Seneca or Pliny, neither of whom could have been on the spot in the reign of Tiberius, when the eclipse took place; nor can it be proved that they had immediate information from all parts of the globe as soon as any extraordinary phenomenon had taken place.

SECONDLY, Neither Pliny nor Seneca have left any works that correspond to the historian's pompous description. Seneca does *not* treat on eclipses at all, in the passage referred to[1]; he speaks indeed of *earthquakes*, but only in a very cursory manner, and does not instance more than four or five, because his object was evidently not to write a history of them, but to investigate their symptoms, causes, and prognostics. The same remark applies to Pliny with respect to earthquakes. They are mentioned only to introduce philosophical observations. The historian, therefore, has but very feeble props to support his assertion. We may reasonably imagine, that if Seneca and Pliny have recorded all the great phenomena of nature, they must of course have explored the Grecian and Roman histories, which were immediately open to their inquiries. Now, let us try an experiment as to what they have derived from those sources with respect to eclipses. Do they mention the total eclipse of the sun, when the celebrated plague happened at Athens, in the first year of the Peloponnesian war? Do they mention the solar eclipse on the day when the foundations of Rome were laid? Do they mention the eclipse foretold by Thales, by which a peace was effected between the Medes and the Lydians? It would be too tedious and useless to ask for many others, which might be mentioned without any fear of our questions being answered in the affirmative.

THIRDLY, The *distinct chapter* of Pliny, in which, according to the historian's lofty representation, we should expect to find the subject of eclipses exhausted by his full and elaborate detail, consists of only *eighteen words*, the purport of which is, that "eclipses of the sun are sometimes of extraordinary duration; such as that which took place on the death of Cæsar, and during the war with Antony, when the sun appeared pale for nearly a year."[2]

LASTLY, This miraculous preternatural darkness did *not* pass without notice. Omitting the supposed attestation of it by Phlegon (a pagan chronologist who wrote during the reign of the emperor Hadrian[3], and whose testimony is cited by Tertullian, Origen, and Eusebius), and also the supposed mention of it by Thallus (who lived in the second century), which is cited by Julius Africanus[4], a writer of great eminence and probity, who lived at the beginning of the third century; — we may remark that there are two other testimonies not founded on the statements of Phlegon and Thallus, which *unequivocally* confirm the evangelical history of the darkness at the crucifixion, viz. those of Tertullian and Celsus. In his Apology for the Christians, which was addressed to their heathen adversaries, Tertullian expressly says, "*At the moment of Christ's death, the light departed from the sun, and the land was darkened at noon-day*; WHICH WONDER IS RELATED IN YOUR OWN ANNALS, AND IS PRESERVED IN YOUR ARCHIVES TO THIS DAY."[5] If the account of this extraordinary darkness had not been registered, Tertullian would have exposed both himself to the charge of asserting a falsehood (which charge was *never* brought against him), and also his religion to the ridicule of his enemies. It is further particularly worthy of remark, that the darkness and earthquake at the crucifixion are both explicitly recognised and mentioned as FACTS by that acute adversary of Christianity, Celsus; who would not have made such an admission, if he could have possibly denied them.[6]

In addition to the preceding observations, we may state that many good and solid reasons may be assigned why profane writers have *not* made mention of the darkness at the crucifixion, which, it is now generally admitted, was confined to the land of Judæa. The most

[1] Nat. Quæst. lib. vi. c. 1. Op. tom. iv. pp. 309—312. edit. Bipont.

[2] Fiunt prodigiosi, et longiores solis defectus: qualis occiso dictatore Cæsare, et Antoniano bello, totius pæne anni pallore continuo. Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. ii. c. 30. tom. i p. 148. edit. Bipont.

[3] See Lardner's Works, vol. vii. pp. 370—387. 8vo.; or vol. iv. pp. 58—67. 4to.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Tertullian, Apol. c. 21.

[6] See Origen contr. Celsum, lib. ii. § 55. p. 94.

obvious is, that they might have no sufficient information of it. The provinces of the Roman empire were very extensive, and we find, in general, that the attention of writers was chiefly confined to those which were nearest to the metropolis. The ancient historians and biographers are remarkably concise, and seldom stop to mention occurrences, which, although they may have happened during the times of which they write, have no relation whatever to their main subject. This was their general rule, and there is no reason for which it should be violated merely to indulge the caprice of the captious, or satisfy the scruples of the petulant. There is no more reason in the nature of the thing itself why the testimony of profane writers should be called for to support the sacred than the sacred should be called for to support the profane. We may then retort the argument, and in our turn ask the historian, and those who have circulated his false account of the progress of Christianity, how they can credit the accounts given by Paterculus, Pliny the elder, Valerius Maximus, and Seneca, when Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John take not the least notice of them? But let it be supposed that the Roman writers had received information of the fact in question, it is most probable that they would have considered it as a natural occurrence, being accustomed to earthquakes and darkness for whole days together, in consequence of the eruptions of Mount Vesuvius. Or, supposing that they had believed it to be a preternatural darkness, would it have been consistent with their principles as heathens to have mentioned it? They must plainly have foreseen what great advantage would have been given to Christianity by it. Their readers would naturally have been led to inquire into the character of the extraordinary person, at whose death the laws of nature were infringed, and this inquiry, as it would have opened a more complete view of the new dispensation, must have led to their conversion. Hence we collect a very satisfactory reason for their silence. Supposing that they knew the fact, and from motives of policy suppressed it, their silence furnishes as strong a proof of its truth as their express testimony could possibly have done.

Upon the whole, we may venture boldly to assert, that even if this fact be destitute of support from profane writers, it is a deficiency which may easily be dispensed with. We believe many things upon the evidence of one credible witness. But in the case before us, we have no less than *three*, whose knowledge of the fact was *never* denied, whose veracity is indisputable, and their integrity not to be impeached. So plainly are the characters of truth marked upon their writings, that every person of common discernment must see them, and he who is not satisfied as to the certainty of what they relate, must give up all pretensions to a sound judgment, and be abandoned to the incurable obstinacy of his own forlorn scepticism.[1]

An example taken from English history will confirm and illustrate the preceding observations. No one in our days, who has read the whole history of the popish plot in Charles the Second's time, with any candour and attention, believes it. The incoherence, and every way

[1] Kett's Bampton Lectures, Notes and Authorities, pp. xxiv.—xxxii.

incredible circumstances of the whole deposition, together with the infamous characters of the witnesses, preclude an assent. Yet, a circumstance to this day unaccounted for — the murder of Sir Edmundbury Godfrey — happened to give it an air of probability. Yet he would be thought injudicious to the last degree, who should thence be inclined to favour the evidence of Titus Oates. The case before us is opposite, indeed, but parallel. Christianity stands supported by evidences of the most unexceptionable nature; yet the circumstance of Seneca's and Pliny's silence concerning the eclipse or preternatural darkness (admit it only for argument's sake) is unaccountable. The evidence of the Gospel is, however, by no means shaken, nor will be shaken, till it can be proved that we must be able to account for every thing in an event, before we admit the testimony of the event itself.

In short, there is no history in the world more certain and indubitable than that contained in the Christian Scriptures, which is supported by the concurring testimony, — not to say of so many men, but of so many different nations, divided, indeed, among themselves in other particulars, but all uniting to confirm the truth of the facts related in the Gospels. And, therefore, even though the Christian institution had perished with the apostles, and there were not in the world at this day so much as one Christian, we should have the most unquestionable evidence that the persons and actions, recorded in the Gospels, and attested by the concurring voice of all nations, really existed in the country of Judæa during the reign of Tiberius, as the evangelists have assured us.[1]

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§ 3. *Collateral Testimonies to the Truth of the Facts recorded in the Scriptures from Coins, Medals, and ancient Marbles.*

There remains yet one more class of collateral testimonies to the credibility of the facts recorded in the Bible, which is not less important and decisive than the series of evidence of profane historians given in the preceding pages. These testimonies are furnished by ancient coins, medals, and inscriptions on marbles; which have survived the wreck of time, and are extant to this day. These remains of antiquity are allowed to be among the most important proofs of ancient history in general; and they afford satisfactory confirmation of many particulars related in the Scriptures. The most remarkable of these we now proceed to submit to the consideration of the reader.

I. The Mosaic Narrative of the Deluge

Is confirmed by a coin struck at Apamea, in Phrygia, in the reign of Philip the elder. On the reverse of this medal is represented a kind of square chest, floating upon the waters: a man and woman are advancing out of it to dry land, while two other persons remain within. Above it flutters a dove, bearing an olive branch,

[1] Edwards, on the Authority, &c. of Scripture, vol. i. pp. 400—420. Macknight's Truth of the Gospel, pp. 305, 306. 343.

and another bird, possibly a raven, is perched upon its roof. In one of the front panels of the chest is the word NOE in ancient Greek characters.[1]

II. Various passages in the Old Testament are confirmed by the successful researches of Dr. Young, Messrs. Salt, Champollion, Coquerel, Rossellini, Sir Gardner Wilkinson, Botta, Layard, Col. Rawlinson, the Rev. George Rawlinson, and other eminent scholars, in deciphering the hitherto illegible hieroglyphics, which are still extant on ancient Egyptian and Assyrian Monuments. To adduce a few instances out of many which might be offered: —

1. Several ages before the time of Sesostris, the shepherd-kings invaded and conquered almost the whole of Egypt, about the year 2080 before the Christian æra, and in the time of the patriarch Abraham. The princes of the eighteenth dynasty (the Theban or Diospolitan), whose chief was Thoutmosis I., the first sovereign after the shepherd-kings, erected the most ancient edifices of Thebes and Egypt. Thoutmosis was adored as a god, under the name of Amenothph, because he had delivered Egypt from the shepherds; the recollection of whose tyranny was odious to the Egyptians and to the kings of that dynasty, to which the Pharaoh, mentioned in the latter part of the book of Genesis, belongs. In Gen. xlvi. 34. Joseph tells his brethren that *Every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.* This hatred of theirs against *shepherds* is confirmed in a very singular manner by a very ancient mummy now at Paris, beneath the buskins of both whose feet is painted a *shepherd, bound with cords.*[2]

2. In the arrangements of the courts of the two first Pharaohs mentioned in the Bible — one of whom was contemporary with Abraham (Gen. xii. 15.) and the other with Joseph (Gen. xxxvii. 36.) — we may recognise the style and Egyptian customs which were re-established after the expulsion of the shepherd-kings. In Exod. i. 11. 14. mention is made of the vast structures, in the building of which the Egyptians embittered the lives of the Israelites *with hard bondage;* and it was precisely the sovereigns of that dynasty, who distinguished themselves by the erection of gigantic monuments. The granite columns and apartments of the palace at Karnac, several temples in Nubia, the great sphinx of the pyramids, and the colossal obelisk of St. John of Lateran, attest the power of Thoutmosis III., the Moeris of the Greeks. Amenophis II. erected the colossal statue which attracted the superstitious curiosity of the Romans. Ramses (or Rameses) II. caused the superb obelisks at Luxor to be erected. M. Champollion read the names of all these sovereigns on the inscriptions of monuments. The Pharaoh, under whose reign Moses was born, was Ramses IV. surnamed Mei-Amoun, that is, the Friend of Ammon; who left numerous edifices built by the children of Israel, whom he so cruelly oppressed. He caused the vast palace of Medinet-Abou to be erected, as well as the temple situated towards the southern gate of Karnac. The sarcophagus of this monarch is preserved in the Louvre at Paris. The contemporary of Moses must have swayed the Egyptian sceptre more than forty years, since the Hebrew legislator passed forty years at his court, and, a long time afterwards, it is said that the king of Egypt died. Now, it appears from Manetho (as quoted by Josephus)[3] that this identical Ramses Mei-Amoun reigned sixty-six years and two months. Are not these unexpected agreements between sacred and profane history evident proofs of truth? Who then has falsified the ancient lists of Egyptian dynasties, the lists written on papyrus, and the ruins of Egypt, to make them agree so well with a few sentences uttered by a Christian named Stephen (Acts vii. 18. *et seq.*), and with a few lines written by a Jew named Moses?[4] Lastly, the Pharaoh, who witnessed

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[1] Bryant's Analysis of Ancient Mythology, vol. iii. pp. 46, 47. 8vo. edit. In the fifth volume, pp. 289—313. he has satisfactorily vindicated the genuineness of the Apamean medal. Seven or eight of these medals are known to be extant, the genuineness of which is acknowledged by Eckhel, the most profound of all modern numismatologists. See his Doctrina Nummorum Veterum, tom. iii. pp. 132. 140. Mr. Murray has given an engraving of this medal after a cast in the Royal Library at Paris. Truth of Revelation demonstrated by an Appeal to existing Monuments, &c., p. 209.

[2] Revue Protestante, Juillet, 1827, p. 12.

[3] Josephus against Apion, book i. c. 15.

[4] Revue Protestante, Juillet, 1827, p. 14. Coquerel, Biographie Sacrée, tom. iii. p. 361.

the ten plagues inflicted on the Egyptians, was Ramses V., surnamed Amenophis, the last sovereign of the eighteenth dynasty, and the father of Sesostris. His name is legible on several parts of the palace of Karnac, which was decorated by him.

3. M. Champollion has shown that the proper names of both sexes in ancient Egypt are almost always composed of the names of gods or of goddesses. In Gen. xli. 45. we read that Pharaoh gave to Joseph in marriage "*the daughter of Potipherah, priest of On.*" (Potipherah is constantly written *Putiphar* in the Coptic version of the Scriptures.) On is Heliopolis, the city of the sun, so termed by the Greeks. *Petephré*, in Egyptian, means *that which belongs to ré*, or the sun. M. Champollion has demonstrated that *shré* or *ré* denotes the *sun*, in the Egyptian language. Thus the hieroglyphic text completely confirms the book of Genesis.[1]

4. In 1 Kings xi. 40. we read that *Jeroboam arose and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt;* and, in 1 Kings xiv. 25. and 2 Chron. xii. 2., that, *in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.* The head or chief of the twenty-second dynasty (the Bubastite) is by Manetho called *Sesonchis* or *Sesonchosis;* and on one of the colonnades which decorate the first court of the great temple (or palace, as it has also been called,) of Karnac, there are two royal legends or inscriptions, on one of which M. Champollion read, in phonetic (or vocal hieroglyphic) characters, the words, — *Amon-mai-Sheshonk;* the well-belowed of Amon (or the sun) Sheshonk. If we bear in mind the peculiar genius of the ancient oriental languages, which, neglecting the vowels as least important, adhere only to the skeletons of words, that is to say, to the consonants, it is impossible not to be struck with the identity of the Egyptian name Sheshonk with the letters of the Hebrew word שישק SHISHAK or SHESHAK, and to recognise in him the Pharaoh who is named Shishak by the sacred historians.[2] In the same temple or palace, M. Champollion also beheld Sesonchis dragging at the feet of the Theban Trinity (Amon, Mouth, and Kons) the chiefs of more than thirty conquered nations, among whom he found written in letters at full length IOUDAH-MALEK, *the king of Judah, or of the Jews.*[3] It is further worthy of remark that the dates read by this accomplished antiquary are expressed precisely in the same manner as we read in the Bible: — *In the fifth year, on the fifth day of the month,* &c. This similitude of phraseology is very striking.[4]

5. Lastly, in 2 Kings xix. 9. and Isa. xxxvii. 9., we read that the king of Assyria heard tidings of *Tirhaka, king of Ethiopia;* who is most probably the Pharaoh mentioned in Isa. xxxvi. 6. The hieroglyphic name *Tarak*, the *Taracus* of the Greeks, (the third king of the twenty-fifth dynasty of Manetho, who terms him an Ethiopian,) was read by M. Champollion on many monuments; and Mr. Salt, without any intercourse with him, having observed that the Egyptians wrote the names of their Greek sovereigns in hieroglyphic characters, as well as those of the Roman emperors, conceived the ingenious idea of inquiring whether they might not have followed the same practice with regard to the inscriptions of the Ethiopian monarchs who preceded those two dynasties. His researches were crowned with success; and he discovered in phonetic characters the name TIRAKA in two places on an inscription from behind a small propylæon or portico at Medinet-Abou, and in two other inscriptions from Birkel in Ethiopia. This *Tiraka* or *Tirhaka*, therefore, is the king of Ethiopia mentioned in the Scriptures as having *came out to fight* against Sennacherib king of Assyria.[5]

III. The account of the WAR, CARRIED ON BY PHARAOH-NECHO AGAINST THE JEWS and Babylonians (which is related in the second

[1] Rev. Prot. Juillet, p. 18. A. L. C. Coquerel, Lettre sur le Système Hieroglyphique de M. Champollion, considéré dans ses Rapports avec l'Ecriture Sainte, p. 30. Amsterdam, 1825. 8vo.

[2] M. Champollion has engraved this royal legend in his Précis du Système Hieroglyphique des anciens Egyptiens. Planches, et explication (Paris, 1824. 8vo.), Plate, No. 116. and description, pp. 12, 13.

[3] Champollion, Septième Lettre, p. 35.

[4] Coquerel, Biographie Sacrée, tom. iv. p. 221. Lettre, p. 30. Rev. Prot. p. 18. Greppo, Essai sur le Système Hieroglyphique de M. Champollion le Jeune, pp. 171, 172. Paris, 1829.

[5] Salt's Essay on Dr. Young's and M. Champollion's Phonetic System of Antiquities, pp. 29—31. 70. Revue Protestante, Juillet, 1827. p. 19.

book of Chronicles), is confirmed by the testimony of the Greek historian Herodotus, and especially by the recent discoveries of the late enterprising traveller, M. Belzoni, among the tombs of the Egyptian sovereigns. The following is the narrative of the sacred historian, in 2 Chron. xxxv. 20—24.

After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho, king of Egypt, came up to fight against Charchemish, by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him. But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war; for God commanded me to make haste; forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not. Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away, for I am sore wounded. His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. And again in xxxvi. 1—4. *Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem. Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And the king of Egypt put him down at Jerusalem, and condemned the land in an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold. And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim.* AND NECHO TOOK JEHOAHAZ HIS BROTHER, AND CARRIED HIM INTO EGYPT.

These passages prove the power and conquests of Pharaoh-Necho; and if we turn to Herodotus we shall find a wonderful agreement with many of the particulars. *Now Necos was the son of Psammeticus, and reigned over Egypt; it was he who began the canals, &c., and he employed himself in warlike pursuits, building galleys, both on the Mediterranean and on the Red Sea, the traces of his dock-yards still existing; and these he used when he had occasion for them.* AND NECOS JOINED BATTLE WITH THE SYRIANS IN MAGDOLUS, AND CONQUERED THEM, AND AFTER THE BATTLE HE TOOK CADYTIS, A LARGE CITY OF SYRIA. *And having reigned in the whole sixteen years, he died, and left the throne to his son Psammis.*[1] The historian, who was better acquainted with Egypt than with Judæa, has here put *Magdolus*, a city of Lower Egypt, for *Megiddo* a city of Judæa, and has further confounded the Hebrews with the Syrians. *Cadytis* is again mentioned by Herodotus[2], as "*belonging to the Syrians of* PALESTINE," and "*as a city not less than Sardes;*" so that there is no doubt that he intended Jerusalem. "Here Καδυτις is evidently taken from the Syriac *Kadutha*, signifying 'the Holy,' from the Hebrew קדושה (KADUSHAH), which is found inscribed on ancient Jewish shekels in the Samaritan character; in modern Hebrew characters, thus, ירושלים ה קדושה (JERUSALEM HA-KADUSHAH), Jerusalem the Holy[3];" the historian affixing a Greek termination, and calling the metropolis of Palestine *Cadytis.*

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[1] Herodotus, lib. ii. c. 159. vol. i. p. 168. edit. Oxon. 1809. Rennell's Geography of Herodotus explained, p. 245.

[2] Ibid. lib. iii. c. 5. vol. i. p. 179.

[3] Dr. Hales's Sacred Chronology, vol. i. p. 425. (second edition); Bp. Walton's Biblia Polyglotta, tom. i. Apparatus de Siclorum Formis, pp. 36. 38. Dr. Prideaux—having referred to Herodotus's account of Pharaoh-Necho's expedition and capture of Καδυτις, or Cadytis, and also to the historian's concise description of it,—says, "By which description this Cadytis could be none other than Jerusalem. For that is situated in the mountains of Palestine, and there was then no other city in those parts which could be equalled to Sardis but that only; and it is certain from Scripture that after this battle Necho did take Jerusalem; for he was there when he made Jehoiakim king. There is, I confess, no mention of this name either in the Scriptures or Josephus. But that it was, however, called so in the time of Herodotus by the Syrians and Arabians, doth appear from this, that it is called by them and all the eastern nations by no other name but one of the same original, and the same signification, even to this day. For Jerusalem is a name now altogether as strange to them as Cadytis is to us. They all call it by the name *Al-Kuds*,

We now come to the researches of M. Belzoni in the tomb of Psammethis or Psammis, the son of Pharaoh-Necho.

In one of the numerous apartments of this venerable monument of ancient art, there is a sculptured group describing the march of a military and triumphal procession with three different sets of prisoners, who are evidently Jews, Ethiopians, and Persians. The procession begins with four red men with white kirtles followed by a hawk-headed divinity: these are Egyptians apparently released from captivity and returning home under the protection of the national deity. Then follow four white men in striped and fringed kirtles, with black beards, and with a simple white fillet round their black hair; these are obviously Jews, and might be taken for the portraits of those who, at this day, walk the streets of London. After them come three white men with smaller beards and curled whiskers, with double-spreading plumes on their heads, tattooed, and wearing robes or mantles spotted like the skins of wild beasts; these are Persians or Chaldæans. Lastly come four negroes with large circular ear-rings, and white petticoats supported by a belt over the shoulder; these are Ethiopians.[1]

Among the hieroglyphics contained in M. Belzoni's drawings of this tomb, Dr. Young discovered the names of Psammis, and of *Nichao* (the *Necho* of the Scriptures and *Necos* of Herodotus).[2] And M. Champollion, jun., who read the name of this prince on several statues, subsequently ascertained that he was Pharaoh-Necho II., the sixth king of the twenty-sixth dynasty.[3]

Numerous additional collateral confirmations of the Old Testament from Egyptian antiquities are given by Mr. Osburn, Dr. Hengstenberg, and Dr. Taylor.[4]

which signifies the same that Cadytis doth, that is, *Holy*: for from the time that Solomon built the temple at Jerusalem, and it was thereby made to all Israel the common place of their religious worship, this epithet of the Holy was commonly given unto it. And therefore we find it thenceforth called in the sacred writings of the Old Testament *Air Hakkodesh*, that is, the *City of Holiness* or the Holy City (Neh. xi. 1. 18.; Isa. xlviii. 2., lii. 1.; Dan. ix. 24.); and so also in several places of the New Testament. And this same title they give it in their coins. For the inscription of their shekels (many of which are still extant), was *Jerusalem Kedushah*, that is, Jerusalem the Holy; and this coin going current among the neighbouring nations, especially after the Babylonish captivity had made a dispersion of that people over all the East, it carried this name with them, and they from thence called this city by both names, *Jerusalem Kedushah*, and at length, for shortness' sake, *Kedushah* only, and the Syrians (who in their dialect usually turned the Hebrew *sh* into *th*) *Kedutha*. And the Syriac, in the time of Herodotus, being the only language that was then spoken in Palestine (the Hebrew having no more been used there or any where else, as a vulgar language, after the Babylonish captivity), he found it when he travelled through that country to be called there, in the Syriac dialect, *Kedutha*, from whence, by giving it a Greek termination, he made it in the Greek language Καδυτις or Cadytis in his history, which he wrote about the time that Nehemiah ended his twelve years' government at Jerusalem. And for the same reason, that it was called *Kedusha* or *Kedutha* in Syria and Palestine, the Arabs in their language called it *Bait Almokdes*, that is, the *Holy Buildings*, or the Holy City, and often with another adjective of the same root and the same signification, *Bait Alkuds*, and at length simply *Alkuds*, that is, the *Holy*, by which name it is now called by the Turks, Arabs, and all other nations of the Mahometan religion in those parts." (Prideaux's Connection of the History of the Old and New Testament, sub anno 610, vol. i. pp. 80, 81. ninth edition, 1725.)

[1] See M. Belzoni's "Narrative of the Operations and recent Discoveries within the Pyramids, Temples, Tombs, and Excavations in Egypt and Nubia," &c. pp. 242, 243. (4to. London, 1820); and also Nos. 4, 5, and 6. of his folio Atlas of Plates illustrative of his Researches. The subjects of these plates were also exhibited in the very interesting model of the Egyptian tomb, exhibited by M. Belzoni, in 1821–22.

[2] See the Atlas of Engravings to Belzoni's Travels, plates 1 to 5.

[3] Greppo, Essai, p. 185. Champollion, Aperçu des Résultats Historiques, p. 13.

[4] Ancient Egypt: her Testimony to the Truth of the Bible. By William Osburn, jun. London, 1846, 8vo. Egypt and the Books of Moses; or, the Books of Moses illustrated by the Monuments of Egypt. By Dr. E. W. Hengstenberg. From the German, by R. D. C. Robbins. Andover (U.S.), 1843. Illustrations of the Bible from the Monuments of Egypt. By William Cooke Taylor, L.L.D. London, 1838, 8vo.

IV. The history of Sennacherib's campaign against the cities of Palestine, in the reign of Hezekiah, is recorded in the inscriptions of Sennacherib discovered at Kouyunjik. Mr. Layard states that the events (which cannot well be abridged) agree with considerable accuracy. One fine series of bas-reliefs commemorates the capture of Lachish by the Assyrian monarch. (2 Kings xviii. 14.; Isa. xxxvi. 2.)[1]

Above the head of the king, in cuneiform characters, is an inscription which is thus translated by Mr. Layard: "Sennacherib, the mighty king, king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgment, before [or, at the entrance of] Lachish (Lakhisha). I give permission for its slaughter." These bas-reliefs supply illustrations of the Bible of very great importance. "The captives were undoubtedly Jews; their physiognomy was strikingly indicated in the sculptures, but they had been stripped of their ornaments and fine raiment, and were left barefooted and half-clothed."[2] Sennacherib's triumphs are also exhibited in the Assyrian marbles in the British Museum; and from the cuneiform inscriptions which have been examined, besides giving an important and interesting sketch of Assyrian history with the names of the kings in the inscriptions from Nineveh[3], Mr. Layard has distinctly traced the names of the sovereigns Jehu[4], Omri, Menahem, Hezekiah, Merodach Baladan, Pharaoh, Sargon, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon, and has further given the names of Judæa, Jerusalem, Samaria, Ashdod, Lachish, Damascus, Hamath, Tyre, Sidon, Gaza, Ekron, Askelon, Lebanon, Egypt, Babylon, Nineveh, Media, Persia, Ararat, and Assyria, and twenty-six other names of countries, cities, &c. mentioned in the Old Testament history.[5] And Col. Sir Henry Rawlinson in 1854 made the important discovery of the name of Belshazzar (*Bel-shar-ezer*, which occurs in the fifth chapter of the prophet Daniel), among the Chaldæan monuments obtained at Múgeyer, the ancient "Ur of the Chaldees."[6]

V. Acts xiii. 7. is confirmed by a coin, proving that the island of Cyprus was at that time under the government of a proconsul.

In the passage referred to, the evangelist Luke, relating the transactions of Paul in Cyprus, gives to Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor of that island, the Greek title of Ανθύπατος, which was applied only to those governors of provinces who were invested with *proconsular* dignity. "And on the supposition that Cyprus was not a province of this description, it has been inferred, that the title given to Sergius Paulus in the Acts of the Apostles was a title that did not properly belong to him. A passage indeed has been quoted from Dion Cassius[7], who, speaking of the governors of Cyprus, and some other Roman provinces, applies to them the same title which is applied to Sergius Paulus. But as Dion Cassius is speaking of several Roman provinces at the same time, one of which was certainly governed by a proconsul, it has been supposed, that for the sake of brevity he used one term for all of them, whether it applied to all of them or not. That Cyprus, however, ought not to be excepted, and that the title which he employed, as well as St. Luke, really *did* belong to the Roman governors of Cyprus, appears from the inscription on a coin belonging to Cyprus itself, and struck in the very age in which Sergius Paulus was governor of that island. It was struck in the reign of Claudius Cæsar, whose head and name are on the face of it; and in the reign of Claudius Cæsar St. Paul visited Cyprus. It was a coin belonging to the people of that island, as appears from the word ΚΥΠΡΙΩΝ on the reverse; and, though not struck while Sergius Paulus himself was governor, it was struck, as appears from the inscription on the reverse, in the time of Proclus, who was *next* to Sergius Paulus in the government

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[1] Layard's Discoveries in Nineveh and Babylon, pp. 139—150.

[2] Ibid, pp. 152, 153. [3] Ibid, pp. 613—625.

[4] "Jehu's name appears on the Black Obelisk in the British Museum, a monument of the Old" [Assyrian] "Empire, dating probably from about B.C. 870." Rawlinson's Bampton Lecture for 1859, p. 403. [5] Layard's Discoveries, &c. pp. 626—628.

[6] Loftus's Chaldæa and Susiana, pp. 132, 133. Lond. 1857, 8vo. This discovery of Sir H. Rawlinson *completely* REFUTES the utterly unfounded assertion of the learned rationalist, De Wette, "that Daniel's account of Belshazzar is a pure invention, that it contradicts" [the ancient Chaldæan historian] "Berosus, and is an unmistakable indication of the unhistorical character which attaches to the entire narrative"!!! Rawlinson's Bampton Lecture for 1859, p. 169.

[7] Hist. Rom. lib. 54. p. 523. ed. Hanoviæ, 1600.

of that island. And on this coin the same title, ΑΝΘΥΠΑΤΟΣ, is given to Proclus, which is given by St. Luke to Sergius Paulus."[1] That Cyprus was a proconsulate is also evident from an ancient inscription, of Caligula's reign (the predecessor of Claudius), in which Aquilius Scaura is called the proconsul of Cyprus.[2]

VI. In Acts xvi. 11, 12., Luke says, "*We came . . . . . to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia,* and *a colony.*" This passage has greatly exercised the ingenuity of critics and commentators.

This is an instance of minute accuracy, which shows that the author of the Acts of the Apostles actually lived and wrote at that time. The province of Macedonia, it is well known, had undergone various changes, and had been divided into various portions, and particularly four, while under the Roman government. There are extant many medals of the first province, or *Macedonia Prima,* mostly of silver, with the inscription ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΗΣ, or, *the first* part *of Macedonia,* which confirm the accuracy of Luke, and at the same time show his attention to the minutest particulars.[3] It is further worthy of remark, that the historian terms Philippi *a colony.* By using the term *κολωνία,* (which was originally a Latin word, *colonia,*) instead of the corresponding Greek word *ἀποικία,* he plainly intimates that it was a Roman colony, which the twenty-first verse certainly proves it to have been. And though the critics were for a long time puzzled to find any express mention of it as such, yet some coins have been discovered, in which it is recorded under this character, particularly one, which explicitly states that Julius Cæsar himself bestowed the dignity and privileges of a colony on the city of Philippi, which were afterwards confirmed and augmented by Augustus. This medal corroborates the character given to the city by Luke, and proves that it had been a colony for many years, though no historian contemporary with himself, whose writings have reached us, has mentioned it under that character. Philippi is, however, incidentally noticed as a colony by the philosopher, the elder Pliny.[4]

VII. In Acts xvi. 14. we read that Lydia, a dealer in purple from Thyatira, had settled at Philippi.

Now it is remarkable that, among the ruins of Thyatira, there is an inscription extant, which was originally made by the corporation of dyers, (it concludes with the words ΟΙ ΒΑΦΕΙΣ,—*the dyers,*) in honour of Antonius Claudius Alphenus, a distinguished man in the reign of Caracalla.[5] Hence we learn that the art and trade of dying purple were carried on in that city. And as double-dyed purple was very expensive (a pound of the precious dye costing not less than a thousand

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[1] Bp. Marsh's Lectures, part v. pp. 85, 86. An engraving of the above-noticed coin may be seen in Havercamp's edition of the Thesaurus Morellianus, in the plate belonging to p. 106.

[2] Gruteri Corpus Inscriptionum, tom. i. pars ii. p. ccclx. no. 3. edit. Grævii. Amst. 1707.

[3] Of this medal there are engravings in the fragments annexed to Calmet's Dictionary, no. cclxxiii. plate i. no. 6., and in Taylor's Geographical Index to the Holy Scriptures, article Macedonia, plate, no. 7. In no. 8. of the same plate, is a medal of the second Macedonia, or *Macedonia Secunda.* There is no medal published of the third Macedonia, but one of the *fourth* Macedonia has been engraved by Wielhamer, in his *Animadversiones in Nummos,* &c. p. 44. no. 11. Vienna, 1738. They have been described by Eckhel (Doctrina Numm. Vet. tom. ii. p 64.), Rasche (Lexicon Rei Nummariæ, tom. iii. col. 39—41.), and Mionnet (Description de Médailles Antiques, tom. i. pp. 456, 457.). Mr. Coombe has described seven of Macedonia Prima in his "Nummorum Veterum Populorum et Urbium, qui in Museo Gulielmi Hunter asservantur, Descriptio," p. 179. No coins of Macedonia Tertia have yet been discovered.

[4] Spanheim, De Usu et Præstantia Numismatum, dissert. ii. pp. 105, 106. Fragments to Calmet, no. cclxxiii. plate 1. no. 5. Intus Philippi colonia. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. iv. c. 18.

[5] Sir George Wheler has given the entire inscription in his Journey into Greece, book iii. p. 233. (Lond. 1672); and his companion, Dr. Spon, has given the same inscription, illustrated with philological notes, in his Miscellanea Eruditæ Antiquitatis, pp. 112, 113.

denarii, or more than thirty pounds sterling), Lydia must have possessed considerable resources, to have carried on such a costly branch of trade, and consequently must have been of some consideration in the city of Philippi.[1]

VIII. In Acts xvii. 23. Paul tells the Athenians that, as he passed through their city and beheld the objects of their worship, he *found an altar with this inscription,* TO THE UNKNOWN GOD (ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΘΕΩ).

No altar with this inscription has come down to our times; but we know, from the express testimony of Lucian, that there was *such an inscription at Athens.* And the occasion of this altar being erected, in common with many others bearing the same inscription, is thus related by Diogenes Laertius: — The Athenians, being afflicted with a pestilence, invited Epimenides to lustrate their city. The method adopted by him was, to carry several sheep to the Areopagus; whence they were left to wander as they pleased, under the observation of persons sent to attend them. As each sheep lay down, it was sacrificed on the spot *to the propitious God.* By this ceremony, it is said, the city was relieved; but, as it was still unknown what deity was propitious, an altar was erected *to the unknown God* on every spot where a sheep had been sacrificed.[2]

On the architrave of a Doric portico at Athens, which was standing when that city was visited about the middle of the eighteenth century by Dr. Chandler and Mr. Stuart (the latter of whom has given an engraving of the portal), is a Greek inscription to the following purport: — "The people" [of Athens have erected this fabric] "with the donations to Minerva Archegetia" [or the Conductress] "by the god Caius Julius Cæsar and his son the god Augustus, when Nicias was archon."

Over the middle of the pediment was a statue of Lucius Cæsar, with this inscription:—"The people" [honour] "Lucius Cæsar, the son of the emperor Augustus Cæsar, the son of the god."

There was also a statue to Julia, the daughter of Augustus, and the mother of Lucius, thus inscribed: — "The Senate of the Areopagus and the Senate of the Six Hundred" [dedicate this statue to] "the goddess Julia, Augusta, Providence."

These public memorials supply an additional proof of the correctness of Paul's observations on the Athenians, that they were too much addicted to the adoption of objects for worship and devotion. They were not, indeed, singular in worshipping the reigning emperor; but flattery could not be carried higher than to characterise his descendants as deities, and one of them (who was most infamous for her profligacy) as no less a deity than Providence itself.[3]

IX. In Acts xix. 35. the Γραμματεὺς, recorder, chancellor, or townclerk of Ephesus, — in order to quell the tumult which had been raised there by Demetrius and his workmen, who gained their livelihood by making silver shrines or models of the temple of Diana in that city, — says to the Ephesians, *What man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana?*

The original word, ΝΕΩΚΟΡΟΝ, is very emphatic, and properly signifies a person dedicated to the service of some god or goddess, whose peculiar office it was to attend the temple and see that it was kept clean; that, at the proper seasons, it was beautified and adorned; and that nothing necessary to the splendour of his or her worship was at any time wanting. Originally, indeed, this word signified nothing more than a sweeper of the temple, and answered nearly to our *sacristan,* or, perhaps, *churchwarden;* in process of time the care of the temple was intrusted to this person, and at length the ΝΕΩΚΟΡΟΙ, or *Neōkoroi,* became persons of great consequence, and were those who offered sacrifices for the life of the emperor.

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[1] Murray's Truth of Revelation demonstrated by an appeal to existing monuments, &c. p. 363.

[2] Diogenes Laertius, in Epimenide, l. i. c. 10. § 3. (tom. i. pp. 117—119. ed. Longolii.)

[3] Dr. Chandler's Travels in Greece, pp. 104, 105.

Whole cities took this appellation [1], and Ephesus had this prerogative above the other cities in Asia Minor; though some of them, as Smyrna, Laodicea, and Pergamus, disputed the primacy with her. There are extant, in various cabinets, numerous medals, in which the appellation of ΝΕΩΚΟΡΟΣ is given to the city of Ephesus in particular, with the several inscriptions of ΕΦΕΣΙΩΝ ΝΕΩΚΟΡΩΝ, Β and ΔΙΣ ΝΕΩΚΟΡΩΝ, Γ or ΤΡΙΣ, and Δ or ΤΕΤΡΑΚΙΣ ΝΕΩΚΟΡΩΝ; intimating that the Ephesians had borne the office of Neōkoroi to the temples erected in honour of the Roman emperors for the *first*, *second*, *third*, and *fourth* times. Of the medals referred to, a catalogue has been given by M. Rasche, to whose learned work the reader is referred.[2] Not to multiply unnecessary examples,—in the valuable cabinet of the British Museum there is a rare bronze medal of the emperor Caracalla, whose head is on the obverse; and on the reverse, of which the following is an accurate representation,



there are *four* temples; the uppermost of which (on the left hand) is the temple of the Ephesian Diana, whose figure appears in the centre. Opposite to it is the temple of Æsculapius; and the two other temples, beneath, are those of Geta and Caracalla. The inscription ΠΡΩΤΩΝ ΑCΙΑC ΕΦΕCΙΩΝ Δ. ΝΕΩΚ. intimates that the Ephesians, the chief [people or citizens] of Asia, had for the fourth time been Neōkoroi in honour of those emperors. Such is the nature of the coincidence furnished by this medal (even if there were no others extant), that it is sufficient of itself to establish the authenticity of the work, in which the coincidence is found. Besides the testimony furnished by this medal (which has never before been engraved), there is extant at Ephesus an ancient Greek inscription, on a slab of white marble, which not only confirms the general history related in Acts xix., but even approaches to several sentiments and phrases which occur in that chapter.[3]

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[1] Philip Rubenius has written a learned Diatribe de Urbibus Neocoris, which the reader will find in Grævius's Thesaurus Antiquitatum Romanarum, tom. xi. pp. 1350—1365. And more recently the subject has been fully discussed by J. H. Krause, in a dissertation entitled ΝΕΩΚΟΡΟΙ, Civitates Neocoræ sive Æditusæ è veterum libris, nummis, lapidibus inscriptis adumbratæ, atque corollariis quattuor additis illustratæ. Lipsiæ, 1844. 4to.

[2] Rasche, Lexicon Rei Nummariæ, vol. ii. columns 650—662. 666—670.

[3] The following is Dr. Chandler's translation of it:—"To the Ephesian Diana. Inasmuch as it is notorious that, not only among the Ephesians, but also every where among the Greek nations, temples are consecrated to her, and sacred portions; and that she is set up, and has an altar dedicated to her, on account of her plain manifestations of herself; and that, besides the greatest token of the veneration paid her, a month is called after her name; by us Artemision, by the Macedonians and other Greek nations, and in their cities, Artemisiōn; in which general assemblies and Hieromenia are celebrated, but not in the holy city, the nurse of its own, the Ephesian goddess:—the people of Ephesus deeming it proper, that the whole month called by her name be sacred and set apart to the goddess, have determined by this decree, that the observation of it by them be altered. Therefore it is enacted, that in the whole month Artemision the days be holy, and that nothing be attended to on them, but the yearly feastings, and the Artemisiac Panegyris, and the Hieromenia; the entire month being sacred to the goddess; for, from this improvement in her worship, our city shall receive additional lustre, and be permanent in its prosperity for ever."—The person who obtained this decree appointed games for the month, augmented the prizes of the contenders, and erected statues of those who conquered. His name is not preserved, but he was probably a Roman, as his kinsman, who provided this record, was named Lucius Phænius Faustus. The feast of Diana was resorted to yearly

With regard to the functions of the Γραμματεὺς or recorder of Ephesus, concerning which there has been much conjecture, it may be remarked that as the Ephesians were at that time solemnising games in honour of Diana (whose celebrated temple was erected at the common expense of all the cities of Asia) under the presidency of the Asiarchs, that is, principal officers or high priests chosen by the community of Asia for that purpose, it is highly probable that this Γραμματεὺς was a person of greater authority than the mere clerk or recorder of Ephesus. Domninus, an ancient author, cited by the chronologer Malela[1], (who, being a native of Ephesus, could not but be acquainted with the public transactions of his own city), relates that, besides the Syriarch, there were the Alytarch, who represented Jupiter, the Γραμματεὺς, who represented Apollo, and the Amphitales, who represented Mercury; and that suitable honours were paid to them by all the people. Apuleius[2] also states, that a Γραμματεὺς presided over certain sacred rites in Egypt. The presumption, therefore, is, that the Γραμματεὺς of Ephesus held a kind of sacerdotal position; and this presumption is converted into certainty by the fact that, among the various coins of that city, which are still extant, there are several containing the names of persons who bore the title of ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΥΣ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΥΣ, or High Priest-Scribe, particularly one which was struck during the triumvirate of Augustus, Anthony, and Lepidus (no very long time before the transaction related in Acts xix.), which has the following inscription:—

ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΥΣ ΓΡΑΜ ΓΛΑΥΚΩΝ ΕΥΘΥΚΡΑΤΗΣ ΕΦΕΣΙΩΝ.

Glaucon Euthycrates, the High Priest-Scribe of the Ephesians.[3]

Now, as this officer was the representative of Apollo, who could be more proper to address the infuriated populace, or more likely to have weight and influence with them, and the force of an oracle in what he said to them, than that officer to whom they paid the honours due to Apollo?[4] The good sense of his address, and the happy effect it produced upon the Ephesian populace, confirm this conclusion.

X. In Acts xxviii. 7. Luke relates that *in the same quarters* (where Paul and his shipwrecked companions had taken refuge) *were possessions of* THE CHIEF *man of the island, whose name was Publius.*

Πρῶτος, *the* CHIEF, was the official appellation of the governor of the people of Melita; as appears from the following inscription, from an ancient marble epitaph found at Malta, and printed by Bochart.[5] Λ. ΚΑ. ΥΙΟΣ. ΚΥΡ. ΙΠΠΕΥΣ ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ, ΠΡΩΤΟΣ ΜΕΛΙΤΑΙΩΝ, *i. e.* L[ucius] Ca[ius] the son of Cyr[enius?] a knight of the Romans, the CHIEF or first of the inhabitants of Melita.

XI. Lastly, the triumphal arch erected at Rome by the senate and Roman people in honour of the emperor Titus (which structure is still subsisting, though greatly damaged by the ravages of time), is an undeniable evidence to the truth of the historic accounts, which describe the dissolution of the Jewish state and government, and also relate the conquest of Jerusalem. This edifice likewise corroborates the description of certain vessels used by the Jews in their religious worship, which is contained in the Old Testament. In this arch are still distinctly to be seen the golden candlestick, the table of shew-bread, with a cup upon it, and the trumpets which were used to pro-

by the Ionians, with their families. Dr. Chandler's Travels in Asia Minor, p. 134. The original Greek inscription is printed in Dr. C.'s Inscriptiones Antiquæ, p. 13. no. xxxvi.

[1] Joannis Malelæ Chronicon, p. 374. &c., cited in Biscoe on the Acts, vol. i. p. 305.

[2] In Milesia undecima, cited by Basnage, Annal. vol. i. p. 673. Biscoe, p. 306.

[3] Rasche, Lexicon Rei Nummariæ, tom. ii. part 1. col. 648.

[4] Biscoe on the Acts, vol. i. p. 306.

[5] Bocharti Geographia Sacra, lib. i. c. 26. Op. tom. i. col. 502. Additional confirmations of the credibility of the New Testament, from ancient coins and medals, may be seen in "Numismatic Illustrations of the Narrative Portions of the New Testament." By J. Y. Akerman. London, 1846. 8vo.

claim the year of Jubilee. Representations of these are given in the third volume of this work.[1]

Further, there are extant numerous MEDALS of Judæa vanquished, struck by order of the Roman general Titus (who was afterwards emperor), in order to commemorate the conquest of Judæa and the subversion of the Jewish state and polity. In the following representation of the reverse of one of these (which is engraved from the original medal, preserved in the cabinet of the British Museum),



the conquered country appears as a desolate female sitting under a tree. It affords an extraordinary fulfilment of Isaiah's prediction, delivered at least *eight hundred* years before — "*She being desolate* SHALL SIT *upon the ground*," (iii. 26.) — as well as a striking illustration of the Lamentations of Jeremiah (i. 1.):— "*How doth the city* SIT *solitary, that was full of people! How is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!*"

[1] See the Vignettes in Vol. III. pp. 266, 267. The best engravings of the arch of Titus are to be found in Hadrian Reland's treatise, De Spoliis Templi Hierosolymitani, in Arcu Titiano Romæ conspicuis. (Ultrajecti, 1716, 8vo.) This arch, "originally an alto-relievo, by the destruction of detached parts has become a bas-relief. . . . . The golden trumpet, candlestick, jubilee-trumpets, table of shew-bread, and two small vessels resting upon it, are accompanied by twenty-one figures and three standards. All the persons represented are Romans. . . . . Of the standards, the central one has the remains of an eagle surrounding it; and the same emblem appears in the ornaments on each side of the design." (Dr. Maitland's Church in the Catacombs, pp. 76, 77. London, 1846.) The destruction of Jerusalem is also *said* to be commemorated by an ancient inscription to the honour of Titus, who, by his father's directions and counsels, had subdued the Jewish nation and destroyed Jerusalem, which had never been destroyed by any princes or people before. (This assertion, however, is contrary to historical truth; for Pompey had conquered the Holy City.) The following is the inscription alluded to:—

IMP. TITO. CÆSARI. DIVI. VESPASIANI. F.
VESPASIANO. AUG. PONTIFICI. MAXIMO.
TRIB. POT. X. IMP. XVII. COS. VIII. P. P.
PRINCIPI. SUO. S. P. Q. R.
QUOD. PRÆCEPTIS. PATRIS. CONSILISQUE. ET.
AUSPICIS. GENTEM. JUDÆORUM. DOMUIT. ET.
URBEM. HIEROSOLYMAM. OMNIBUS. ANTE. SE.
DUCIBUS. REGIBUS. GENTIBUSQUE. AUT. FRUSTRA.
PETITAM. AUT. OMNINO. INTENTATAM. DELEVIT.

It is, however, proper to remark, that some doubts have been entertained concerning the genuineness of this inscription. The diligent antiquary, Gruter (from whom we have copied it) acknowledges that it is not known where this inscription stood; and that Scaliger is of opinion, that it was the invention of Onufrio Panvinio. See Gruteri Inscriptiones Antiquæ, tom. i. p. ccxliv. no. 6. and Gronovius's Thesaurus Antiquitatum Romanarum, tom. iii. p. 111.

It would not have been difficult to adduce numerous additional testimonies from medals and inscriptions, which have been collected and described by various learned modern travellers, who have explored Greece and Asia Minor; but the length to which this chapter has already unavoidably extended forbids the production of further evidences of this kind.—Stronger testimonies than these it is impossible to bring for the credibility of any fact recorded in history,—even of the important transactions which have taken place in our own days on the continent of Europe, and to which the British nation has been a party. Yet, nothwithstanding this cloud of witnesses, modern infidels have affirmed that the facts related in the scriptures of the New Testament never happened; that Jesus Christ was a mythological character [1], and that the four Gospels are mere fabrications and romances. With as much truth may it be said that the first Napoleon Buonaparte, whose ambition for many years disturbed the peace of Europe (and whose memory continues to be fondly cherished by millions in France), is a mythological person who never had any real existence. For the events of his career are recorded in a variety of documents, purporting to be issued by the different governments of Europe, which have been quoted or alluded to by various daily and periodical journals, as well as by contemporary historians, who profess to record the transactions of the present century; and they are also perpetuated, by structures [2] and medals [3], which have been executed in order to commemorate particular victories or other transactions.

CHAP. IV.

THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

SECT. I.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

I. The preceding *facts* have shown that the writers of the Old and New Testaments were men of the utmost integrity, and faithful his-

[1] The assertion above alluded to was taken, without acknowledgment, from Volney, who first made it at the close of his "Ruins of Empires," and who was refuted by the Rev. Peter Roberts, in a learned volume entitled "Christianity Vindicated, in a Series of Letters addressed to Mr. Volney, in answer to his Book called 'Ruins.'" 8vo. London, 1800. This is only one instance, out of many, that might be adduced, of the total destitution of candour in the opposers of revelation, who continue to re-assert the long-since refuted falsehoods of former infidels, as if they had never before been answered.

[2] Such is the Waterloo Bridge over the river Thames, which is *said* to commemorate the victory of Waterloo, obtained by British prowess, in 1815, over the forces of Buonaparte. Such also is the triumphal column, erected in the Place Vendôme, at Paris, to commemorate the victories of the French army in Germany, in 1805, and which, according to a Latin inscription engraved thereon, is composed of the brass cannon conquered from the enemy during a campaign of three months.

[3] Of this description are the "Waterloo Medals," distributed by order of parliament, and at the expense of the British nation, to the illustrious general, and the brave officers and soldiers who were engaged in the memorable battle of Waterloo; and also the beautiful series of medals struck under the direction of Mr. Mudie, to commemorate the achievements of the British army; to which may be added the Crimean Medals, distributed among the brave officers and soldiers engaged in the Crimean campaign of 1854–56, and also the series of French medals, usually called the Napoleon medals, executed for the purpose of commemorating the achievements of the French armies.

torians, whose relations are entitled to the fullest and most implicit credit. But since an honest man may possibly mistake, — not indeed in facts which he affirms to be true upon his own knowledge, but in inferences from those facts, in precepts and doctrines, or in delivering the sentiments of others, — if we can urge nothing more in behalf of these writers, their authority will be only human. Something further is requisite, besides a pious life and a mind purified from passion and prejudice, in order to qualify them to be teachers of a revelation from God, namely, the imparting such a degree of divine assistance, influence, or guidance, as should enable the authors of the Scriptures to communicate religious knowledge to others, without error or mistake, whether the subjects of such communications were things then immediately revealed to those who declared them, or things with which they were before acquainted, which divine guidance is now generally termed INSPIRATION.

II. That the Scriptures were actually dictated by inspiration, may be concluded both from the REASONABLENESS and from the NECESSITY of the thing.

1. " It is REASONABLE that the sentiments and doctrines, developed in the Scriptures, should be suggested to the minds of the writers by the Supreme Being himself. They relate principally to matters, concerning which the communicating of information to men is worthy of God; and the more important the information communicated, the more it is calculated to impress mankind, to preserve from moral error, to stimulate to holiness, to guide to happiness; the more reasonable is it to expect that God should make the communication free from every admixture of risk of error. Indeed, the notion of inspiration enters essentially into our ideas of a revelation from God; so that, to deny inspiration is tantamount to affirming that there is no revelation; and to doubt the possibility of inspiration, is to call in question the existence of God. And why should inspiration be denied? Is man out of the reach of him who created him? Has he, who gave to man his intellect, no means of enlarging or illuminating that intellect? And is it beyond his power to illuminate and inform, in an especial manner, the intellects of some chosen individuals, — or contrary to his wisdom to preserve them from error, when they communicate to others, either orally or by writing, the knowledge he imparted to them, not merely for their own benefit, but for that of the world at large, in all generations?

2. " But, further, inspiration is NECESSARY. The necessity of revelation has already been shown, from the concurrent testimony of facts, experience, and history in every age, of which we have any authentic accounts[1]; and the same reasoning and facts establish the necessity of inspiration; that is, ' that the teachers who were commissioned to impart this revelation, and to consign its doctrines to such records as might faithfully hand them down to posterity, should have their faculties throughout their whole task so guided and guarded by the influences of the Divine Spirit on their minds, as to suggest to them

[1] See pp. 3—15. *suprà.*

all essential and appropriate truth (as connected with the subjects to which the revelation extended), and to preserve them from all error.'"[1]

The necessity of inspiration is further evident:

(1.) From the fact, that "the *subjects* of Scripture render inspiration necessary; for some past facts recorded in the Bible could not possibly have been known if God had not revealed them.

(2.) "Many things are there recorded as future, that is, are predicted, which God alone could foreknow and foretell, which, notwithstanding, came to pass, and which, therefore, were foretold under divine inspiration.

(3.) "Other things again are far above human capacity, and could never have been discovered by men; these, therefore, must have been delivered by divine inspiration.

(4.) "The authoritative language of Scripture, too, argues the necessity of inspiration, admitting the veracity of the writers. They propose things, not as matters for consideration, but for adoption: they do not leave us the alternative of receiving or rejecting: they do not present us with their own thoughts, but exclaim, *Thus saith the Lord*, and on that ground demand our assent. They must, therefore, of necessity, speak and write as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit, or be impostors;"[2] and the last supposition is precluded by the facts and reasonings which have been stated in the preceding pages.

III. As the writers of the Scriptures profess to have their doctrine from God, so it could not be the invention of men.

1. *It could* NOT *be the contrivance of* wicked *men.*

Had *they* invented a religion, they would unquestionably have made it more favourable to their own inclinations, passions, and appetites: they would not have fettered themselves, or laid themselves under such moral restraints as are imposed by the Bible, neither would they have denounced such tremendous judgments against the evil ways which they prefer and love: they would not have consulted so entirely the honour of God, and the reputation of piety, virtue, and goodness, as the Scriptures do; but they would have adapted the whole agreeably to their own evil nature, wishes, and desires. Indeed, if we could suppose them to be capable of this (which yet is to make them act contrary to nature), we cannot imagine that they should sacrifice all their worldly interests and prospects, and even their lives, for the sake of the Bible. Did ever bad men act such a part, contrive the greatest good, suffer and die to advance it?

2. *Equally evident is it, that the Bible could* NOT *be the contrivance of* good *men.*

The supposition involves them in a guilt perfectly inconsistent with their character. They speak in the name of God, and they profess to have received their doctrine from him. Now if it was otherwise, and they were conscious of a forgery, they must be the grossest impostors in the world, which is so directly contrary to all virtue and honesty, that it can never be imputed to any man who truly deserves the name

[1] Conybeare's Theological Lectures, p. 183.

[2] Dr. O. Gregory's Letters on the Evidences of the Christian Religion, vol. i. pp. 264-266.

of good. Consequently, the Bible must be the word of God, INSPIRED by him[1], and thus given to man.

IV. Since the Jewish and Christian Scriptures profess to be given by inspiration of God, and have been recognised as such in every age[2] (which in itself is no mean presumptive argument that they are divinely inspired writings), and since also there have been many impostors in the world, who have pretended to be divinely inspired, it is necessary that the authors of the revelation contained in the Bible should produce satisfactory evidences of their divine mission. What then are the evidences with which every rational creature ought to be perfectly satisfied?

This important question admits of a clear and decisive answer; for, as the existence of any power is demonstrated by its operations, so the possession of *supernatural knowledge* is established by the performance of *supernatural works*, or miracles; or as an acquaintance with any language is manifested by speaking it with propriety and ease, so the gift of inspiration is unquestionably displayed by the foretelling of future events with precision. *Miracles* and *Prophecy*, therefore, are the two grand criteria on which most stress is laid in the Scriptures. Prophecies are the language of inspiration, and miracles are the operation of that divine agency by which the prophet is influenced. The testimony of our senses is not a more satisfactory evidence of the existence of external objects than miracles and prophecy are of the existence of divine revelation; and though both these modes of evidence are calculated, as well for us who live in remoter times, as for those who lived in the earliest, yet the evidence from miracles seems more particularly addressed to *them*, as that from prophecy is to *us*. To them, miracles would appear the best proof of the truth of a revelation, as they are addressed to the senses of the rude and the refined, and establish the truth of a religious system at once, without subtle disquisitions, for which comparatively few persons possess leisure, talents, or inclination. Miracles convince the mind at once; while prophecy does not give immediate conviction,

[1] When we say that the Scripture is the inspired word of God, we do not mean that it was all spoken by Him, or that it was written by Him, or that *every* thing that is contained therein is the word of God. But a distinction is to be made between those *precepts*, which inculcate justice, mercy, and holiness of life, and the *historical parts*, which show the consequences of a life in opposition to those principles. The first are properly *sacred*, because they not only lead a man to happiness even in this life, but also give him an evidence of things not seen in the life to come; and thus are called the *word of God*, as those moral virtues can only have their origin from the fountain of all goodness. The last, that is, the historical parts, though some are the words of good men,—wicked men,—or the speeches of Satan (on which account they cannot be termed the word or words of God), have a similar tendency; as they show, on the one hand, the malice, pride, and blasphemy of the spirit of wickedness, and on the other hand, that spirit of divine philanthropy, which, throughout the whole Bible, breathes nothing but "peace on earth, good will towards men." On the nature and extent of inspiration, see the Appendix to this volume, No. II.

[2] For the testimony of the Jews, in the time of Christ, it is sufficient to refer to the passages of the New Testament, and to Josephus against Apion, book i. §. 8., which are given in p. 43. *suprà*. For the belief of the modern Jews, see their confession of faith, which has been in use ever since the 13th century, in Lamy's Apparatus Biblicus, vol. i. pp. 245, 246. Dr. Whitby has collected the testimony of Christians during the first three centuries, in the General Preface to his commentary, pp. xvii.—xx.

but the *means* of conviction to such as in due time shall compare predictions with events. The ancients, who beheld the miracles, had reason to believe that the prophecies would be accomplished; just as the moderns, who see them fulfilled, have, besides other arguments, a strong presumption that miracles were performed. The arguments from miracles, depending on written testimony, will at all times be equally forcible, while that from prophecy (which has been termed a standing miracle) is *increasing* in strength through every age; and the more prophecies are fulfilled, the more testimonies there are, and confirmations of the truth and certainty of divine revelation; and in this respect we have eminently the advantage over those who lived in the days of Moses and the prophets, of Christ and his apostles. They had this growing evidence in part, but to us this amazing web is still more unfolded, and more of its wonderful texture is displayed. They indeed heard the discourses of Moses and the prophets, of Christ and his apostles, and they beheld their miracles: but we have this advantage over them, that several things, which were then only foretold, are now fulfilled; and what were to them only matters of *faith*, are become matters of FACT and CERTAINTY to *us*.[1]

The evidence furnished by miracles and prophecy is so abundantly sufficient to prove that the Bible is the word of God, that we might safely rest its divine authority on these proofs. There are, however, other internal evidences, which, though not so obviously striking as miracles and prophecy, come home to the consciences and judgments of every person, whether learned or illiterate, and which leave infidels in every situation without excuse. These internal evidences are — the sublime doctrine and excellent moral precepts revealed in the Scriptures, — the wonderful harmony and intimate connection subsisting between all the parts of Scripture, — the miraculous preservation of the Scriptures, — their tendency to promote the present and eternal happiness of mankind, as evinced by the blessed effects which are invariably produced by a cordial reception of the Bible, — and the peculiar advantages possessed by the Christian Revelation over all other religions.

SECT. II.

THE MIRACLES, RELATED IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS, ARE PROOFS THAT THE SCRIPTURES WERE GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD.

I. A MIRACLE defined.

A miracle is *an effect or event, different from the established constitution or course of things*, or *a sign obvious to the senses that God has interposed His power to control the established powers of nature* (*commonly termed the laws of nature*), *which effect or sign is wrought either by the immediate act, or by the assistance, or by the permission of God, and accompanied with a previous notice or declaration that it is performed according to the purpose and by the power of God, for the proof or*

[1] Bp. Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies, vol. i. pp. 3, 4. ninth edition.

evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority or divine mission of some particular person.

Nature is the assemblage of created beings. These beings act upon each other, or by each other, agreeably to certain rules formed by Infinite Wisdom, to which God has been pleased to conform his own agency. These rules are called by philosophers the *laws of nature,* and in the Scriptures, the *ordinances of heaven and earth.*[1] Effects which are produced by the regular operation of these laws, or which are conformable to the established course of events, are said to be *natural;* and every palpable suspension or controlment of, or deviation from, these laws, or rather from the progress of things according to these laws — which is accompanied with a previous notice or declaration that it is performed according to the purpose and by the power of God — is a *miracle.* "Thus the production of grain by vegetation is according to a law of nature; were it to fall like rain from the clouds, there would be a miracle. Or, it is a law of nature that the dead return not to life; were a dead person to become alive again, there would be a miracle. It is thus carefully to be distinguished, although the distinction be not often observed, from events of extraordinary magnificence or unusual occurrence. A miracle, indeed, must be unusual; but events may be both unusual and magnificent which are not miraculous. The appearance of a comet is unusual, and a violent thunder-storm is magnificent; but in neither the one nor the other is there a suspension or alteration of any of nature's laws. All the various appearances, indeed, which material or mental phenomena may, according to those laws, assume, we are perhaps far from knowing. But it is one thing to assume an appearance, which, although a variety, is obviously, from its analogy, resolvable into a general law, and another, to suspend or reverse the law; and it is by this total alteration, of what from ample experience and induction, even we, with all our ignorance, can safely pronounce to be a law of nature, that a miracle must be distinguished from every other phenomenon. We ascertain these laws by an experience so extensive and uniform, that it produces a certainty of expectation, scarcely inferior to the certainty accompanying the testimony of our senses; this undoubted permanency being the foundation of all those rules of conduct in the affairs of life, which are the same in all generations, and implied in all the most brillant discoveries, and profound calculations, in the science of physics."[2] It is further essential to a miracle, that it be accompanied with a previous notice or declaration that it is performed according to the purpose and by the power of God, for the proof of evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority or divine mission of some particular person. "This intimation is necessary, that it may not seem to happen in the ordinary course of things; and it must be beyond the reach of human calculation and power, that it may neither appear to be the effect of fore-

[1] Jer. xxxiii. 25., xxxi. 35.; Job. xxxviii. 33

[2] Dr. Cook's Inquiry into the Books of the New Testament, p. 337. Edinburgh, 1821. 8vo.

sight and science, as an eclipse, nor the contrivance of human ingenuity and expertness, as the feats of jugglers."

II. Nature of the EVIDENCE arising from miracles.

It is commonly objected that a miracle is beyond our comprehension, and is therefore contrary to reason.

ANSWER. — This is by no means the case. The possibility of miracles, such as we have described them to be, is *not* contrary to reason, and consequently their credibility is capable of a rational proof; and though we cannot give a mechanical account of the manner how they are done because they are done by the unusual interposition of an invisible agent, superior both in wisdom and power to ourselves, we must not, therefore, deny the fact which our own senses testify to be done. Every thing we see is, in one sense, a miracle: it is beyond our comprehension. We put a twig into the ground, and in a few years find that it becomes a tree; but how it draws its nourishment from the earth, and how it increases, we know not. We look around us, and see the forest sometimes shaken by storms, at other times just yielding to the breeze; in one part of the year in full leaf, in another, naked and desolate. We all know that the seasons have an effect on these things, and philosophers will conjecture at a few immediate causes; but in what manner these causes act, and how they put nature in motion, the wisest of them know not. When the storm is up, why does it not continue to rage? When the air is calm, what rouses the storm? We know not, but must, after our deepest researches into first causes, rest satisfied with resolving all into the power of God. Yet, notwithstanding we cannot comprehend the most common of these appearances, they make no impression on us, because they *are* common, because they happen according to a stated course, and are seen every day. If they were out of the common course of nature, though in themselves not more difficult to comprehend, they would still appear more wonderful to us, and more immediately the work of God. Thus, when we see a child grow into a man, and, when the breath has left the body, turn to corruption, we are not in the least surprised, because we see it every day; but were we to see a man restored from sickness to health by a word, or raised to life from the dead by a mere command, though these things are not really more unaccountable, yet we call the uncommon event a miracle, merely because it *is* uncommon. We acknowledge, however, that both are produced by God, because it is evident that no other power can produce them.

Such, then, is the nature of the evidence which arises from miracles; and we have no more reason to disbelieve them, when well attested and not repugnant to the goodness or justice of God, only because they were performed several ages ago, than we have to disbelieve the more ordinary occurrences of Providence which passed before our own time, because the same occurrences *may* never happen again during our lives. The ordinary course of nature proves the being and providence of God; these extraordinary acts of power prove the divine commission of that person who performs them.

"No event can be justly deemed miraculous merely because it is strange, or even to us unaccountable; for it may be nothing more than the regular effect of some physical cause operating according to an established though unknown law of nature. In this country earthquakes happen but rarely, and at no stated periods of time; and for monstrous births perhaps no *particular* and satisfactory account can be given; yet an earthquake is as regular an effect of the established laws of nature as the bursting of a bomb-shell, or the movements of a steam-engine; and no man doubts, but that, under particular circumstances unknown to him, the monster is nature's genuine issue. It is therefore necessary, before we can pronounce an event to be a true miracle, that the circumstances under which it was produced be

known, and that the common course of nature be in some degree understood; for in all those cases in which we are totally ignorant of nature, it is impossible to determine what is, or what is not, a deviation from her course. Miracles, therefore, are not, as some have represented them, appeals to our ignorance. They suppose some antecedent knowledge of the course of nature, without which no proper judgment can be formed concerning them; though with it their reality may be so apparent as to leave no room for doubt or disputation. Thus, were a physician instantly to give sight to a blind man, by anointing his eyes with a chemical preparation, which we had never before seen, and to the nature and qualities of which we were absolute strangers, the cure would to us undoubtedly be *wonderful;* but we could not pronounce it *miraculous,* because it might be the physical effect of the operation of the unguent on the eye. But were he to give sight to his patient merely by commanding him to receive it, or by anointing his eyes with spittle, we should with the utmost confidence pronounce the cure to be a miracle; because we know perfectly that neither the human voice, nor human spittle, has, by the established constitution of things, any such power over the diseases of the eye. No one is now ignorant, that persons apparently dead are often restored to their families and friends, by being treated, during suspended animation, in the manner recommended by the *Humane Society.* To the vulgar, and sometimes even to men of science, these resuscitations appear very *wonderful;* but as they are known to be effected by physical agency, they can never be considered as *miraculous* deviations from the laws of nature, though they may suggest to different minds very different notions of the state of death. On the other hand, no one could doubt of his having witnessed a real miracle, who had seen a person, that had been four days dead, come alive out of the grave at the *call* of another, or who had even beheld a person, exhibiting all the common *evidences* of death, instantly resuscitated merely by being *desired* to live."[1]

Since miracles are effects different from the established constitution of things, we are certain that they will never be performed on trivial occasions; for the laws, in conformity to which created beings act, being a consequence of the nature of those beings, and of the relations which they bear to each other, are invariable. It is by them God governs the world, he alone established them: he alone can suspend them; and from the course of things thus established by Infinite Wisdom, no deviation can be made but by God himself, or by some person to whom he has delegated his power.

III. Design of Miracles.

A miracle becomes a proof of the character or mission of him by whom it was wrought, by being *professedly* wrought for the confirmation of either. A miracle is the testimony of God. From the perfect veracity of Him, who is the Supreme Being, it irresistibly results that he never can give, nor rationally be supposed to give, his testimony to any thing but truth. When, therefore, a miracle is wrought in confirmation of any thing, or as evidence of any thing, we know

[1] Bp. Gleig's edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible, vol. iii. p. 241.

that that thing is true, because God has given to it his testimony. The miracles of Moses and of Christ were wrought to prove that their mission and doctrine were from God: therefore they certainly were from God.

1. To this it has been OBJECTED[1], first, that believers in the Bible argue in a circle, and that they prove the doctrine by the miracle, and the miracle by the doctrine; and, secondly, that miracles are asserted by the Scriptures themselves to have been wrought in confirmation of falsehood.

ANSWER. — (1.) The triumph of the adversaries of Christianity would indeed be complete, if we asserted that a doctrine can be proved to be reasonable and worthy of God *only* by miracles, and should then make use of the doctrine to prove that the miracles come from God. But this is not the case. Miracles alone cannot directly prove the truth or falsehood, the reasonableness or absurdity of any doctrine. As miracles are appeals to our senses, so are doctrines to our reason. They are properly credentials and testimonials, which, when a man can produce openly and fairly, if he teaches nothing absurd, — much more if his doctrines and precepts appear to be good and beneficial, — he ought to be obeyed.

(2.) The opposers of revelation are greatly mistaken when they assert that Christians argue in a circle, in proving the doctrines first by miracles, and then the miracles again by the doctrines; and the mistake lies in this, — that men do not distinguish between the doctrines which we *prove* by miracles, and the doctrines by which we *try* miracles, for they are not the same doctrines. The great doctrines of natural religion have for their evidence the works of nature, and want not the support of miracles. God never wrought miracles to prove the difference between moral good and evil; and if any man were asked how he proves temperance or chastity to be duties, or murder or adultery to be sins, he would not recur to miracles for an argument. Though these and similar duties are enforced in the Gospel, they were always truths and duties before the coming of Christ; and we are in possession of them without the help of miracles or revelation. And these are the doctrines by which we try the miracles. But when any new doctrine is published to the world, of which nature has given no notice, it is of necessity that such new doctrine should be established by new proofs. Now the doctrines which are to be proved by miracles are the new revealed doctrines of Christianity, which neither were nor could be known to the reason of man: — such are the doctrines of salvation and redemption by Christ, of sanctification and regeneration by the Spirit of God; and who ever brought these doctrines to prove the truth or divine original of the miracles?

2. It has also been objected that miracles are asserted, by the Scriptures themselves, to have been wrought in confirmation of falsehood; — as, for example, by the magicians in Egypt, the witch of Endor, and by Satan in the time of Christ's temptation.

ANSWER. — (1.) If the magicians of Egypt did work miracles, they were wrought by the permission of God, with a view to make the final triumph of his own cause, in the hands of Moses, more the object of public attention, and more striking to the view of mankind. This was done when the magicians themselves were put to silence, and forced to confess that the works of Moses were accomplished by *the finger of God.* (Exod. viii. 19.) But the truth is, the magicians did NOT perform any miracles. All that they did (as the narrative of Moses expressly states) was to busy themselves in their enchantments: by which every man now knows, that, although the weak and credulous may be deceived, miracles cannot possibly be accomplished.[2]

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[1] By Rousseau and others, whose objections have been re-echoed by more recent opposers of revelation.

[2] Dr. Dwight's System of Theology, vol. ii. p. 508. That the Egyptian magicians did *not* work miracles, has been proved at considerable length by Dr. Farmer, in his Dissertation on Miracles, chapter iv. sect. i Dr. Graves has given the chief part of Dr.

(2.) The witch of Endor neither wrought nor expected to work any miracle. (1 Sam. xxviii. 7—25.) This is clearly evident from her astonishment and alarm at the appearance of Samuel. Saul, who expected a miracle, beheld Samuel without any peculiar surprise: she, who expected *none*, with amazement and terror. Indeed, it does not appear from the narrative, neither is it to be supposed, that this woman had power to call up Samuel, whom Saul wished to consult. But, before the sorceress could prepare her enchantments for the purpose of soothing and flattering Saul, the prophet Samuel, commissioned by God, appeared, to her astonishment and consternation, and denounced the judgment of death upon Saul. We are certain that, in this case, Samuel was sent by God himself, because the message he delivered respected a future event, and it is the prerogative of God alone to declare what shall happen.[1]

(3.) Satan is said by the evangelist (Luke iv. 5.) to have taken Jesus Christ up into an exceeding high mountain, and to have shown him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, in a moment of time, which transaction a modern scoffing antagonist of the Scriptures termed "the most extraordinary of all the things called miracles." But the truth is, that this transaction is *not* one of the "things called miracles:" it is not mentioned as effected by supernatural means or without Christ's free consent. Neither were all the kingdoms of the *world* exhibited to him. The Greek word, οἰκουμένης, here translated *world*, very frequently signifies land or country, and ought to have been thus rendered in the passage just cited[2]; the meaning being no other than that Satan showed to Jesus Christ all the four tetrarchies or kingdoms comprised in the land of Judæa. In this transaction it will not be pretended that there was any thing miraculous.

The proper effect, therefore, of miracles is to mark *clearly* the divine interposition; and the Scriptures intimate this to be their design, for both Moses and the prophets, and Jesus Christ and his apostles, appealed to them in proof of their divine mission. Hence we draw this consequence, that he who performs a miracle, performs it in the name of God, and on his behalf; that is to say, in proof of a divine mission.

IV. Credibility of Miracles vindicated and proved.

Whatever miracles are wrought, they are *matters of fact*, and are capable of being proved by proper evidence, as other facts are. To those who beheld the miracles wrought by Moses and Jesus Christ, as well as by his apostles, the seeing of those miracles performed was sufficient evidence of the divine inspiration of Moses and Jesus Christ. The witnesses, however, must be supposed to be acquainted with the course of nature, so as to be able to judge that the event in question was contrary to it. With respect to the miracles recorded in the Scriptures, this cannot be doubted; for no man of ordinary understanding could be incapable of ascertaining that the event was contrary to the course of nature, when the Israelites passed through the Red Sea, and afterwards over the river Jordan, the waters being stayed in their current on either side; when diseases were healed by a word; when sight was imparted to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and the powers of speech to the dumb, merely at command, and without the use of any other means; especially when a corpse, that

Farmer's Observations, with some additional remarks, in his Lectures on the Four last Books of the Pentateuch, vol. i. Appendix, Sect. ii.

[1] On this subject the reader will find a well-written and satisfactory communication in the London Christian Instructor for 1818. Vol. i. pp. 641—648.

[2] That the above is the proper rendering of οἰκουμένη, is fully proved by Dr. Lardner. Works, vol. i. pp. 241. 255, 256. 8vo.; or vol. i. pp. 132. 139. 140. 4to.

had begun to putrify, was restored to life by the speaking of a word. But to *other men*, miracles, like other events, admit of the evidence of testimony. Now, as we cannot doubt the competency of witnesses to ascertain facts, their credibility is the only point to be considered; and this must be determined upon the principles on which the credibility of testimony, in general, depends. As this topic has been dexterously seized by the advocates of infidelity, in order to decry the credibility of the miracles recorded in the Bible, the following hints on the value of human testimony may be found useful in enabling the student to investigate and explain them.

For estimating the value of *single evidences* the two following plain rules have been laid down: —

1. "Any thing capable of being proved by mere testimony is credible in proportion to the opportunity which the witness had of being well informed concerning it himself, and his freedom from any bias that might make him wish to impose upon others.

"If the person who gives us information appears to be a competent judge of it, and to have been in a situation in which he had the best opportunity of being rightly informed, and if there be no appearance of its being his interest to deceive us, we give our assent; but we hesitate in proportion to the doubts we entertain on either of these heads.

2. "The *more* persons there are who relate the same transaction, of which they are equally credible witnesses, the stronger is the evidence for it. But the more persons there are through whose hands the *same narration* is conveyed to us, the weaker is the evidence.

"In this latter case, the witnesses are called *dependent* ones; but in the former they are said to be *independent*. Whatever imperfection there may be in any one of a number of independent witnesses, it is in part removed by the testimony of others; but every imperfection is increased in proportion to the number of dependent witnesses, through whose hands the same story is transmitted."

3. The proper mark or criterion of a story being related by a number of independent witnesses of full credit, is their complete agreement in the principal arguments, and their disagreement with respect to things of less consequence, or at least variety, or diversity, in their manner of relating the same story.

"The reason of this is, that to things of principal importance they will all equally attend, and therefore they will have their minds equally impressed with the ideas of them; but that to things of less consequence they will not give the same attention, and therefore they will be apt to conceive differently concerning them.

"If a number of persons agree very minutely with respect to all the facts of any narrative, general and particular, and also in the order and manner of their narration, it will amount to a proof that they have agreed together to tell the same story; and in this they will be supposed to have been influenced by some motive not favourable to the value of their testimony; and besides, having learned circumstances one of another, they cannot be considered as independent of one another. All the histories which have been written by persons in every respect equally credible, agree in the main things, but they are as certainly found to differ with regard to things of less consequence. We likewise distinguish with respect to the *nature of the fact* to which our assent is required; for we expect more numerous, more express, and, in all points, more unexceptionable evidence, according to the degree of its previous improbability, arising from its want of analogy to other facts already known: and in this there is a gradation from things which are antecedently highly probable, and therefore require but little positive evidence, to things which are

utterly incredible, being so contrary to what we already know of the course of nature and the author of it, that no evidence could convince us of it."

For instance, "if my servant should tell me that, as he was passing through a certain place, he saw a friend of mine, who (he knew) had business in that neighbourhood, and the character of my servant was such that I had never known him to tell me a wanton lie, I should readily believe him; and if I had any thing to do in the case, I should without hesitation act upon the supposition that what he told me was true. But if the same servant should say, that coming through the same place, he saw another of my friends, whom I knew to have been dead, I should not believe him, though the thing in itself was not naturally impossible; and if ten or a dozen persons of our common acquaintance, persons of knowledge and curiosity, should, independently of one another seriously inform me that they were present themselves, and had no doubt of the fact, I might believe it."[1] It follows, however, from this observation, that miracles require a much stronger testimony than common facts; and such testimony, it will be seen in the following pages, they really have.

The greatest part of our knowledge, whether scientific or historical, has no other foundation than testimony. How many facts in chemistry, in physics, or other departments of science, do we receive without having seen them, only because they are attested to us; though they may seem contrary not only to our personal experience, but also to common experience! For instance, we are informed that the fresh-water polype, when cut into pieces, is reproduced in each piece; that the pieces of this insect, when put end to end, intergraft and unite together; that this same insect may be turned inside out like a glove; and that it lives, grows, and multiplies, in this new state, as well as in its natural state. These are strange facts, and yet we admit them upon credible testimony.[2] Again, a man who has never been out of Great Britain is, by testimony alone, as fully convinced of the existence of foreign countries as he is of the existence of the country in which he lives. No person, who has read history, has any more doubt of there being such a city as Rome or Paris, or that there formerly existed such persons as Alexander the Great and Julius Cæsar, than he has of the truth of the proposition that two and two make four, or that queen Elizabeth some time since reigned in this island, or that Queen Victoria is, at present, sovereign of the British empire. The truth of these events is conveyed to us by the general and concurrent testimony of history, by which it is so firmly established, that, were a set of learned men now to arise, and, without being able to produce any ancient contradictory statements, to endeavour by specious reasonings to destroy our belief of it, it would argue the greatest folly and weakness to be moved by them. The truth of other facts is substantiated in the same manner, and upon such evidence almost the whole business and intercourse of human life is conducted. But, however applicable this reasoning may be to the ordinary affairs of human life, it has been laid down by some persons as a maxim, that no human testimony is sufficient to prove a miracle. This assertion was first made by a late celebrated philo-

[1] Dr. Priestley's Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion, vol. i. pp. 274—278. On the subject of the credibility of testimony, Mr. Gambier's Moral Evidence may be very advantageously consulted.

[2] The curious reader will find accounts of numerous experiments on these extraordinary animals in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, vols. xlii. xliii. xliv. and xlix.

sopher, whose notions have been adopted by all later deists, and whose argument in substance is this: —"Experience, which in some things is variable, in others is uniform, is our *only* guide in reasoning concerning matters of fact. Variable experience gives rise to probability only; an uniform experience amounts to proof. Our belief of any fact, from the testimony of eye-witnesses, is derived from no other principle than our experience of the veracity of human testimony. If the fact attested be miraculous, there arises a contest of two opposite experiences, or proof against proof. Now, a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as complete as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined; and if so, it is an undeniable consequence, that it cannot be surmounted by any proof whatever derived from human testimony."[1]

Now, to this reasoning, or the most prominent and essential parts of it, several decisive answers have been or may be given. A few of these may properly find a place here.

(1.) "Dr. Campbell, in his celebrated 'Dissertation on Miracles,' shows the fallacy of Mr. Hume's argument thus: —'The evidence arising from human testimony is *not* derived *solely* from experience; on the contrary, testimony has a natural influence on belief, antecedent to experience.

"'The early and unlimited assent given to testimony by children gradually contracts as they advance in life: it is therefore more consonant to truth to say that our *diffidence* in testimony is the result of experience than that our *faith* in it has this foundation. Besides, the uniformity of experience in favour of any fact is not a proof against its being reversed in a particular instance. The evidence arising from the single testimony of a man of known veracity will go farther to establish a belief of its being actually reversed. If his testimony be confirmed by a few others of the same character, we *cannot* withhold our assent to the truth of it. Now, though the operations of nature are governed by uniform laws, and though we have not the testimony of our senses in favour of any *violation* of them; still, if in particular instances we have the testimony of thousands of our fellow-creatures, and those, too, men of strict integrity, swayed by no motives of ambition and interest, and governed by the principles of common sense, that they were actually witnesses of these violations, the constitution of our nature obliges us to believe them.'

(2.) "Mr. Hume's reasoning is founded upon too limited a view of the laws and course of nature.

"If we consider things duly, we shall find that lifeless matter is utterly incapable of obeying any laws, or of being endued with any powers; and, therefore, what is usually called *the course of nature* can be nothing else than the arbitrary will and pleasure of God, acting continually upon matter, according to certain rules of uniformity, still bearing a relation to contingencies. So that it is as easy for the Supreme Being to alter what men think the course of nature as to preserve it. Those effects which are produced in the world regularly and indesinently, and which are usually termed the works of nature, prove the constant providence of the Deity; those, on the contrary, which, upon any extraordinary occasion, are produced in such a manner as it is manifest could not have been either by human power, or by what is called chance, prove undeniably the immediate interposition of the Deity on that special occasion. God, it must be recollected, is the governor of the *moral* as well as of the *physical* world; and since the moral well-being of

[1] Encyclopædia Britannica, vol. i. art. *Abridgment.*

the universe is of more consequence than its physical order and regularity, it follows, obviously, that the laws, conformably with which the material world seems generally to be regulated, are subservient, and may occasionally yield to the laws by which the moral world is governed. Although, therefore, a miracle is contrary to the *usual course* of nature (and would indeed lose its beneficial effect if it were not so), it cannot thence be inferred that it is 'a violation of the *laws* of nature,' allowing the term to include a regard to *moral* tendencies. The laws by which a wise and holy God governs the world cannot, unless he is pleased to reveal them, be learnt in any other way than from *testimony;* since, on this supposition, nothing but testimony can bring us acquainted with the whole series of his dispensations, and this kind of knowledge is absolutely necessary previously to our correctly inferring those laws. Testimony, therefore, must be admitted as constituting the principal means of discovering the real laws by which the universe has been regulated; that testimony assures us that the *apparent* course of nature has often been interrupted to produce important moral effects; and we must not at random disregard such testimony, because, in estimating its credibility, we ought to look almost infinitely more at the moral than at the physical circumstances connected with any particular event."[1]

(3.) The futility of Mr. Hume's sophism may also be shown, even upon its own avowed principles.

If the secret of compounding gunpowder had perished by the accidental death of its discoverer, immediately after its extraordinary powers had been exhibited before a hundred competent witnesses, on the principles of the sophism now before us, the fact of its extraordinary powers must immediately be rejected as a manifest falsehood. For, that a small black powder should possess such powers contradicts the universal experience of mankind. The attestation, therefore, of the hundred witnesses plainly contradicts the universal experience of mankind. But it is more probable that these hundred witnesses should be liars than that the universal experience of mankind should be contravened. Therefore, the pretended black powder possessed no such extraordinary powers as those which these false witnesses would fain ascribe to it.

(4.) This sophism (for argument it can scarcely be called) "proves too much, and therefore proves nothing."

[1] Dr. O. Gregory's Letters on the Evidences, &c. of the Christian Revelation, vol. i. pp. 176, 177. This argument is pursued to a considerable extent by Professor Vince, in his Sermons on the Credibility of Miracles, 8vo.; and with much acuteness by Dr. Dwight, in his System of Theology, vol. ii. pp. 498—505. See also Bp. Marsh's Lectures, Part VI. Lect. 30. pp. 72—91.; and Dr. Cook's Inquiry into the Books of the New Testament, pp. 336—352. The sceptical theory of Hume concerning testimony has been exposed with singular ability by Dr. Whately, in his "Historic Doubts" relative to Napoleon Buonaparte, who has applied it to the history of that extraordinary man, to which he has shown that it applies with so much greater force than it does to the Jewish or Christian narrative, as to reduce the disciple of Hume to this dilemma, viz. either to abandon his theory altogether, or to apply it first where it is most applicable; and upon those grounds, on which he impugns the Christian Scriptures, to acknowledge the accounts of Buonaparte, with which the world was so long amazed and terrified, to have been a mere forgery, —the amusement of wits,—or the bugbear of politicians.

The reader, who is desirous of *fully* investigating the subject of miracles, will find it very ably treated in Drs. Campbell's and Adams's Treatises, in reply to the sophistry of Hume; in Dr. Hey's Norrisian Lectures, vol. i. pp. 157—200.; in Dr. Price's Four Dissertations on Providence, &c. diss. iv. pp. 384. *et seq.* (4th edit.); in the Criterion of Dr. Douglas, Bp. of Salisbury; in Dr. Elrington's Sermons on Miracles, at the Donnellan Lectures for 1795, 8vo. Dublin, 1796.; and in Dr. Wardlaw's Treatise on Miracles. Glasgow. See also Bp. Gleig's Dissertation on Miracles (in the third volume of his edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible, pp. 240. *et seq.*), in which the endeavours in a celebrated literary journal to support the sceptical notions of Hume and his followers are most ably exposed; as they also are in the Rev. J. Somerville's "Remarks on an article in the Edinburgh Review, in which the Doctrine of Hume on Miracles is maintained." 8vo. Edinburgh, 1815. The fifth and sixth volumes of Professor Vernet's Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne also discuss the subject of miracles at considerable length, and present both solid and learned replies to the objections of the opposers of revelation.

"It proves too much; for, if I am to reject the strongest testimony to miracles because testimony has often deceived me, whilst nature's order has never been found to fail, then I ought to reject a miracle, even if I should see it with my own eyes, and if all my senses should attest it; for all my senses have sometimes given false reports whilst nature has never gone astray; and, therefore, be the circumstances ever so decisive or inconsistent with deception, still I must not believe what I see, and hear, and touch; what my senses, exercised according to the most deliberate judgment, declare to be true. All this the argument requires, and it proves too much; for disbelief in the case supposed is out of our power, and is instinctively pronounced absurd; and, what is more, it would subvert that very order of nature on which the argument rests; for this order of nature is learned only by the exercise of my senses and judgment, and if these fail me in the most unexceptionable circumstances, then their testimony to nature is of little worth."[1]

V. Refutation of the objection, that the evidence for the credibility of miracles decreases with the lapse of years.

It is further objected by the disciples of Mr. Hume, that "whatever may be conceded to those who received miracles as true from the testimony of *concurrent* witnesses, those who live a thousand years after the event can have no reason to believe it; and that if we admit that concurrent testimony *may* augment, still *successive* testimony diminishes, and that so rapidly as to command no assent after a few centuries at most."

Answer.—This objection is specious, but very far from being correct. It is not, indeed, denied "that there may be cases in which credibility vanishes with time; but no testimony is really in the nature of things rendered less credible by any other cause than the loss or want of some of those conditions which first made it rationally credible. A testimony continues *equally* credible so long as it is transmitted with all those circumstances and conditions which first procured it a certain degree of credit amongst men, proportionate to the intrinsic value of those conditions. Let it be supposed that the persons who transmit the testimony are able, honest, and diligent in all the requisite inquiries as to what they transmit, and how should the credibility due to their testimony be weakened but by the omission of circumstances? which omission is contrary to the hypothesis. No calculation of the decrease of the credibility of testimony, in which a man bears witness respecting realities, and not the fictions of his own brain, can ever proceed upon any other principle than that of the characters and qualifications of the witnesses; and, therefore, as far as the credibility of any matter of fact depends upon pure testimony, those who live at the remotest distance of time may have the same evidence of the truth of it, as those persons who lived nearest to the time in which the thing was said to be done, that identical time being of course excluded.

"In what possible manner, for example, can the evidence on which *we* believe the facts related in the Gospels be less than that on which those facts were accredited by Christians in the second or third centuries? They possessed the standard writings of the evangelists; so do we: what those books then contained, they now contain; and the invention of printing seems likely, under the care of Providence, to preserve them genuine to the end of time. This admirable invention has so far secured all considerable monuments of antiquity, that no ordinary calamities of wars, dissolutions of governments, &c. can destroy any material evidence now in existence, or render it less probable to those who shall live in a thousand years' time, than it is to us. With regard to the facts of the Christian religion, indeed, it is notorious that our evidence in favour of them has *increased* instead of diminishing since the era of printing, the reformation of religion, and the restoration of letters; and, as even the *recent* inquiries of learned men have produced fresh evidence, there is every reason to hope it will continue to increase. Indeed, it is only with regard to the facts related in the Bible, that men ever talk of the daily diminution of credibility. Who complains of a decay of evidence in relation to the actions of Alexander, Hannibal, Pompey, or Cæsar? How many fewer of the

[1] Dr. Channing's Discourse on the Evidences of Revealed Religion, p. 20.

events recorded by Plutarch, or Polybius, or Livy, are believed now (on account of a diminution of evidence), than were believed by Mr. Addison, or Lord Clarendon, or Geoffrey Chaucer? It might be contended with some show of probability, that we know *more* of those ancients than the persons now mentioned; but that is widely different from accrediting *less*. We never hear persons wishing they had lived ages earlier, that they might have had better proofs that Cyrus was the conqueror of Babylon, that Darius was beaten in several battles by Alexander, that Titus destroyed Jerusalem, that Hannibal was entirely routed by Scipio, or Pompey by Julius Cæsar: though we sometimes find men of ardent and enterprising minds exclaiming — 'O that I had lived and been present when such and such splendid events occurred: how lively an interest should I have taken in such scenes, how much concern in their termination!' And, indeed, it is the frequent hearing of like exclamations that causes men to confound weight of testimony with warmth or depth of feeling; and to lose sight of the essential difference between real evidence, or the true basis for belief of history, and the sensible impression or influence which such history may make upon the mind. We believe as firmly that Lucretius killed himself in the delirium of a fever, as that Lucretia stabbed herself in consequence of the wrongs she had received from Tarquin's son; yet we feel a much more lively interest in the latter event than in the former. The fate of Carthage, or the result of the contest between Anthony and Octavius respecting the empire of the world, would doubtless be much more deeply felt, and much more warmly conversed about, within two centuries of the circumstances, than they ever are now; yet those who then conversed about them had just as much reason to doubt their occurrence as we have; that is, just none at all. And the like reasoning will apply to all the circumstances recorded in authentic history. So that, having established the genuineness and authenticity of the books of Scripture on evidence far superior to that on which other historic books are received, it is the most idle and ridiculous thing imaginable, to affect to disbelieve any of the facts therein recorded on account of the remoteness of the times in which they occurred."[1]

Thus, the historical evidences for the genuineness, truth, and divine authority of the Scriptures are so far from growing less and less by the lapse of ages (as some antagonists of revelation have insinuated), that, on the contrary, they are progressively increasing with increasing years; for so many new evidences and coincidences have been discovered in favour of the Jewish and Christian histories, as abundantly to make up for any evidences that may have been lost in former ages; and, as this improvement of the historical evidences is progressively increasing, there is every reason to believe that they will daily become more and more irresistible to all *candid* and serious inquirers.[2]

VI. But, however satisfactory the preceding general and abstract evidences may be, it is not necessary to rest the defence of miracles against the objections of infidels wholly upon them. The miracles related in the Bible are accompanied by such evidences as it will be found difficult to adduce in support of any other historic fact, and such as cannot be brought to substantiate any pretended fact whatever.

Since, as we already have had occasion to observe[3], the proper effect of a miracle is *clearly* to mark the divine interposition; it must

[1] Dr. O. Gregory's Letters on the Evidences, &c. of the Christian Revelation, vol. i. pp. 196. 199. On this subject see Mr. Benson's Hulsean Lectures for 1820, pp. 78—98.

[2] The reader who is desirous of seeing the argument (which is here necessarily treated with brevity) fully discussed, is referred to the Hulsean Prize Essay, for 1831, by the Rev. George Langshaw, B. A. (Cambridge, 1832. 8vo.), entitled "The Evidences of the Truth of the Christian Religion are not weakened by Time."

[3] See p. 208. *suprà.*

therefore have characters proper to indicate such interposition; and these CRITERIA are six in number.

1. It is required, then, in the first place, that a fact or event, which is stated to be miraculous, should have an important end, worthy of its author.

2. It must be instantaneously and publicly performed.

3. It must be sensible (that is, obvious to the senses) and easy to be observed; in other words, the fact or event must be such that the senses of mankind can clearly and fully judge of it.

4. It must be independent of second causes.

5. Not only public monuments must be kept up, but some outward actions must be constantly performed in memory of the fact thus publicly wrought.

6. And such monuments must be set up, and such actions and observances be instituted, at the very time when those events took place, and afterwards be continued without interruption.[1]

1. The first character of a miracle is, AN IMPORTANT END, AND WORTHY OF ITS AUTHOR. For what probability is there, that the Almighty should specially interpose, and suspend the laws by which He governs this world, without any necessity, for a frivolous reason, inconsistent with his wisdom, and unworthy of his greatness? Every miracle, then, must have a useful end, and one to which second causes are *inadequate*; — as, to authorise a prophet, or to establish a revelation. An end so wise and so benevolent is well worthy of the Supreme Being.

This character of a true miracle is found in *all* the miracles recorded as being performed by Moses and Jesus Christ. None of them are represented as having been wrought on trivial occasions. The writers who mention them were eye-witnesses of the facts, which facts they affirm to have been performed publicly, in attestation of the truth of their respective dispensations. They are indeed so incorporated with these dispensations, that the miracles cannot be separated from the doctrines; and if the miracles were not really performed the doctrines cannot be true. Further, the miracles of Moses and of Jesus Christ were wrought in support of revelations, which opposed all the religious systems, prejudices, and superstitions of the age. This circumstance alone sets them, in point of authority, infinitely above the pagan prodigies recorded by ancient writers, as well as the pretended miracles of the romish church; many of which may be shown to be mere natural events, while others are represented as having been performed in secret, on the most *trivial* occasions, and long before the time of the writers by whom they are related; and such of them as at first view appear to be best attested, are evidently tricks contrived for interested purposes, to flatter power, or to promote the prevailing superstitions, and the erroneous doctrines which that church has imposed upon her members, as articles of faith, that must be believed on pain of damnation.

2. A second criterion of a miracle is, that IT BE INSTANTANEOUSLY AND PUBLICLY PERFORMED, AND BEFORE CREDIBLE WITNESSES.— A business, huddled up in a cloister before a few interested monks, is not properly attested. But when an action is performed before the public eye, as the miracles of Moses and those of Christ were, or

[1] These criteria for judging of miracles, with their illustrations, are chiefly abridged from Mr. Leslie's Short and Easy Method with the Deists, and Professor Claparede's "Considerations upon the Miracles of the Gospel," in answer to Rousseau, translated and published in 8vo. London, 1758.

before witnesses who have totally exculpated themselves of having any end but that of truth, we have all the attestation we can reasonably desire.

(1.) It must be INSTANTANEOUSLY performed.

A miracle does not present the shades and gradations observable in nature Nature proceeds not by fits and starts, but is gradual and progressive in its operations; does not create, but unfolds; nourishes, and causes to sprout and grow; sets to work second causes, which act only by little and little, and do not produce their effect until the end of a certain period. From this rule the divine agency is entirely free. God *said*, "Let there be light, and there WAS light."

(2.) Further, PUBLICITY or notoriety is requisite.

Not that a miracle performed in the sight of a few witnesses is the less a miracle on that account. It is enough that there is a sufficient number of spectators worthy of credit. The notoriety of this or that particular miracle may be more or less restrained by circumstances; and we cannot reject a miracle, properly established, under the pretence that it has not had all the notoriety which we might have imagined to be necessary. How great soever may be the number of witnesses, we can always conceive a greater. But there is a degree of notoriety which satisfies reason; and if it were not so, testimonial proof could never be complete.

To this criterion of a miracle, it has been OBJECTED, that Jesus enjoined secrecy on some of the persons on whom he had wrought miraculous cures, and hence it has been insinuated that they could not bear the test of examination.

ANSWER. — A little attention will show that this objection is unfounded. "Distinguish the times, and the Scriptures will agree."[1] This observation is of particular importance in showing that the contradictions, which the opposers of revelation have asserted to exist in the relations of Christ's miracles, are utterly unfounded; and also in showing the reason why he commanded *some* of the persons whom he had healed not to divulge their miraculous cures to any man, while he performed others with the greatest publicity.

Jesus Christ, having delighted and instructed the multitude with his discourses, the fame of them, and of his mighty works, so struck the people, that the crowd which assembled around him increased every day. In the universal expectation of the Messiah which then prevailed, there was reason to fear lest the Jews, under the impulse of blind but ardent zeal, should have declared him their king, or lest some seditious spirit should take advantage of their favourable disposition towards him, to create some disturbance among that people. This indeed is evident from the Gospel, which informs us that the Jews had laid a scheme *to take him away by force, and make him a king*. (John vi. 15.) But Jesus did not choose to give umbrage to the Roman government. Though he was to be condemned to death, it was not necessary he should be so as a rebel to Cæsar. That fine testimony was to be borne to his innocence, — *I find no fault in this man*. (Luke xxiii. 4.) Determined to seal with his blood the truth of his religion, he first proved his divine mission, multiplied the witnesses of his miracles, confirmed the faith of the apostles, gave them instructions, and destroyed the prepossession that the Messiah was to be a temporal king, surrounded with the pomp of worldly grandeur. But all this was not the work of a few days. A rapid instruction, joined to a multitude of miracles crowded into a short space of time, would not have left traces deep enough in the minds of men. Infinite Wisdom, therefore, permitted not our Saviour to kindle the hatred of his enemies too soon, nor to deliver himself into their hands *before his hour was come*. He was in the mean time to work miracles, and to give them the necessary authenticity; but their greater or less notoriety depended upon times, places, and persons. By making these distinctions, we shall discern in our Divine Saviour a wisdom as constant in its aim, as admirable in the appropriation of means to the variety of circumstances. He acted less openly in Judæa: Jeru-

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[1] Distinguite tempora, et concordabunt Scripturæ. Augustin. de Verb. Domini, serm 16.

salem especially required from him great circumspection. He was there under the eye of Pilate, the sanhedrin, and the priests; and the eagerness of the people to follow him might have readily furnished them with a pretence to accuse him as seditious. In the seventh chapter of the Gospel of John we learn, that *Jesus retired into Galilee, not choosing to remain in Judea, because that the Jews sought to kill him.* (John vii. 1.) Out of Judea he was more at liberty. We must not therefore wonder at his saying to the demoniac of Gadara, *Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee.* (Luke viii. 39.) Gadara was a city where there were many heathens: a disturbance among the people there was not so much to be feared. Jesus acted also more openly in Galilee. We read in the fourth chapter of Matthew, that he there performed miracles in a very public manner. Such was the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves; and yet, as soon as he saw that the people were on the point of taking him away to make him a king, *he retired to a mountain.* (John vi. 15.) He had regard therefore to the different disposition of men's minds. This was sometimes so favourable to him, that, choosing to distribute into different places the light of his doctrine, he prescribed silence to those whom he cured; that he might not be too long detained in the same place by the multitude, who, being informed of a new miracle, would have importuned him without ceasing. Thus, when he had raised up Jairus's daughter, he forbad the parents to publish it.

That our Lord chose to distribute equally the light of his doctrine is evident from the Gospel. We learn (Mark i. 38., Luke iv. 43.) that when he had wrought several miracles in Capernaum, he said, *Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for therefore came I forth.* The people *staying him, that he should not depart from them, he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also.*

But this distinction of times will furnish us with the most light in perusing the narrative of our Saviour's miracles. At his entrance upon his ministry Jesus Christ used the utmost caution, not choosing to be detained at the commencement of his course. It was at the entrance upon his ministry that he healed the leper spoken of in Mark i. 40—45. Accordingly, the evangelist adds, that he recommended to the leper to keep silence respecting his cure. (ver. 44.) Presently after, he performed his miracles more openly; but took the wise precaution of qualifying their splendour. It was with this view that he declared his kingdom was not of this world. Luke informs us that the people were amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered at all things which Jesus did, he said to his disciples, *Let these sayings sink down into your ears; for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.* (Luke ix. 44.) The further he advanced in his course, the more eclat and notoriety did he give to his miracles. On the approach of his last passover, he hesitated not to celebrate it at Bethany, at Jerusalem, and in sight of his enemies. We learn from Matthew (xxi. 14. with John xii. 37.), that *the blind and the lame came unto him in the temple, and that he cured them in the presence of the chief priests.* When he had laid the foundations of his religion, the reserve which he had formerly used was no longer necessary; it would have shown more weakness than prudence.

The preceding remarks will serve to remove the apparent contradictions arising from the different degrees of notoriety which Jesus Christ gave to his miracles. As he read men's hearts, the different dispositions which he there discovered led him to diversify his measures. He tempered the splendour of his miracles, when any event might result from that splendour injurious to his religion. The infinite Wisdom which enlightened him, discovered to him, in this respect, combinations which would have escaped a mortal sight. When, therefore, he appears to vary his process, it is not that he changes his plan, but he avoids the obstacles which might injure it.[1]

3. A miracle must, in the third place, BE SENSIBLE AND EASY TO

[1] Claparede's Considerations upon the Miracles of the Gospel, in answer to Rousseau, part. i. c. 7.

BE OBSERVED; in other words, the facts purporting to be miraculous must be of such a nature that the senses of mankind can certainly perceive that both the event is real, and its origin supernatural.[1]

It must turn upon laws which are generally known, and not upon such as are scarcely or not at all known; nor upon subjects too remote from us, or which require the *experienced* eye of an observer in order to be perceived. A supernatural motion in the ring or satellites of Saturn could not therefore be a miracle for the generality of the earth's inhabitants; it would at most be only so to astronomers. A miracle, being calculated to establish the divine interposition, ought to be more within the reach of men: signs from earth, therefore, will be preferable to signs from heaven.—If a man display a phial full of blood, which *sometimes* congeals and *sometimes* liquefies, he has no right to our credit, unless he submit his phial to the examination of our senses. But when the waters of the Nile are turned into blood; when millions are fed with manna; when a man is raised from the dead; when four or five thousand people are fed by a pittance:—in such cases there can be no deception; our senses, which are the only competent judges, have the means of judging.

4. A miracle ought to be INDEPENDENT OF SECOND CAUSES, or performed without any natural instrument.

If any external action or foreign circumstances *accompany* it (as was commonly the case), this action or circumstance has no natural connection with the effect produced. This it is which particularly distinguishes miracles from natural events. The latter have a natural cause; and that cause is proportionate to the effects which result from it. Thus every body which is in motion moves in proportion to the force that impels it. But the immediate special interposition of God excludes that of physical agents; in every miracle, the proportion between causes and effects no longer subsists. Medicine has remedies proper for curing diseases: these remedies bear a certain relation to the nature of the malady which they are to remove or destroy; but no such relation is discoverable in miracles. It is by natural means that the understanding is enlightened and instructed in those things of which it was previously ignorant. I speak a language that is foreign to me; I devoted time and labour to the acquisition of it, and employed the assistance of a master: but if, independently of such aids, my mind be instantaneously enriched with all the words of a language before unknown to me, the effect has not its cause in nature. The event is supernatural. The application of this remark to the apostles, at the day of Pentecost, is too obvious to be insisted upon.

It has been OBJECTED to this criterion of a miracle, that Jesus Christ, in three of his miracles, made use of an external application; which, if it were necessary to the cure, looks like the application of some hidden means of art. If it were unnecessary, such process is arraigned as being improper in the mode, and even ridiculous.

[1] "There are two things," says Archbishop Tillotson, "necessary to a miracle:—that there should be a supernatural effect wrought, and that this effect be evident to sense, so that, though a supernatural effect be wrought, yet if it be not evident to sense, it is, to all the ends and purposes of a miracle, as if it were not, and can be no testimony or proof of any thing, because it stands in need of another miracle to give testimony to it, and to prove that it was wrought. And neither in Scripture, nor in profane authors, nor in common use of speech, is any thing called a miracle, but what falls under the notice of our senses; a miracle being nothing else but a supernatural effect evident to sense, the great end and design whereof is to be a sensible proof and conviction to us of something that we do not see. For want of this, transubstantiation is no miracle; a sign or miracle is always a thing sensible, otherwise it could be no sign. Now, that such a *change* as is pretended in transubstantiation should really be wrought, and yet there should be no sign of it, is a thing very wonderful; but not to sense, for our senses perceive no change. And that a thing should remain to all appearance just as it was, hath nothing at all of wonder in it. We wonder, indeed, when we see a strange thing done, but no man wonders when he sees nothing done." Sermons, vol. ii. p. 440. 8vo. London, 1820.

Answer.—The three miracles in question are those of the man who had been born blind (John ix. 1—7.), the blind man in the vicinity of Bethsaida (Mark viii. 23—26.), and the deaf man near the sea of Galilee. (Mark vii. 32—37.) In the first of these, "he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and commanded him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam; the man went thither, and washed, and returned seeing." In the second case, "he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town, and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught? and he looked up, and said, I see men as trees walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up, and he was restored, and he saw every man clearly; and he sent him away to his own house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town." Nearly similar was our Saviour's treatment of the deaf man who had an impediment in his speech, into whose ears he put his fingers, and "spit and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, — Be opened! and straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain."

"These three are the only instances where a *deliberate external application* is related to have been used, and in all these cases the reason for using it seems to have been *one and the same, namely, to convey to the individuals, on whom the miracles were performed, a clear assurance that Jesus was the person at whose command, and by whose agency, the cure was wrought, and to enable them to state to others the grounds of this assurance fully and circumstantially.* For this purpose our Saviour used such a mode of application as was best calculated to make an impression on the senses these men possessed, unimpaired, antecedent to the miracle, and such as led them to observe that he was about to interpose, in order to perfect those organs which were defective. A little attention will show that every circumstance in the different modes of application had this tendency.

"A blind man can know another only by the voice or the touch. The blind man near Bethsaida our Lord led out of the town remote from the crowd, that he might be sure of the person who spoke to or touched him; he then spat on his eyes, and laid his hands on him, and restored him to sight, though imperfectly, — after that, he put his hands again upon his eyes, and he saw clearly. What possible mode could give him a more full assurance that the cure was wrought by the interposition of an external agent, and that Jesus was that agent? The deaf man could judge of the intentions of another only by seeing what he does; him therefore our Lord took aside from the multitude, that he might fix and confine his attention to himself, and then he put his fingers into his ears, and touched his tongue, thus signifying to him that he intended to produce some change in these organs; he then looked up to heaven, at the same time speaking, to signify that the change would proceed from a divine power, exercised at his interposition.

"The very same purpose was equally answered by our Lord's application to the eyes of the man born blind; it assured him that the person who came close to him, and spoke to him, and anointed his eyes, was the sole agent, by whose interposition the cure was wrought. Immediately, on approaching our Saviour, after receiving his sight, he must have recognised him by his voice. Had the grounds of his assurance been less full and circumstantial, he never could have so unanswerably silenced the objections, and replied to the captious queries of the Pharisees, — *What did he do to thee? how opened he thine eyes? — He answered, and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash; and I went and washed, and I received sight.*

"We may be confirmed in believing this to have been the design of these external applications, by observing, that they were used in no instance except those of blindness and deafness, when a defect of the senses rendered them necessary to convey such assurance of Jesus having been the author of the miracle. And still more, by observing that it does not appear that any of these three men had any previous knowledge of our Saviour's power and character. The man born blind, he healed without any solicitation. The blind man at Bethsaida, and the deaf man, do not appear to have come of themselves, they were brought by their friends; more precaution was therefore necessary to call their attention to the person by whom the miracle was wrought, and give them full evidence that it was his sole work. When the two blind men at Capernaum, and two others near Jericho, applied to our Saviour to be healed, it was with a declared previous conviction of his

divine power that they followed him, crying, *Son of David, have mercy upon us!* Here, therefore, a less remarkable external application was sufficient; as they professed their belief, Jesus only required that this profession should be sincere, *Believe ye, said he, that I have the power to do this? and they said, Yea, Lord: then he touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you; and their eyes were opened.*

"If these remarks are just, they exhibit one of those numberless cases, where incidents apparently minute and objectionable, when well considered, display the miraculous nature of the facts, and the admirable propriety of our Lord's conduct in every circumstance; and every such instance confirms strongly the conclusion, that our Lord's miracles were not delusive visions, or the extravagances of a wild and senseless fanatic, but plain proofs of a divine power, exhibited with the sobriety and dignity becoming his divine character."[1]

5. NOT ONLY PUBLIC MONUMENTS MUST BE KEPT UP, BUT SOME OUTWARD ACTIONS MUST ALSO BE CONSTANTLY PERFORMED, IN MEMORY OF THE FACTS THUS PUBLICLY WROUGHT.

6. SUCH MONUMENTS MUST BE SET UP, AND SUCH ACTIONS AND OBSERVANCES INSTITUTED AT THE VERY TIME WHEN THOSE EVENTS TOOK PLACE, AND BE AFTERWARDS CONTINUED WITHOUT INTERRUPTION.

These two rules render it impossible that the belief of any facts should be imposed upon the credulity of after-ages, when the generation asserted to have witnessed them had expired; for, whenever such facts come to be recounted, if not only monuments are said to remain of them, but public actions and observances had further been constantly used to commemorate them by the nation appealed to, ever since they had taken place, the deceit must be immediately detected, by no such monuments appearing, and by the experience of every individual, who could not but know that no such actions or observances had been used by them to commemorate such events.

VII. Let us now apply the criteria, thus stated and explained, to the ILLUSTRATION of a few of the miracles related in the Sacred Writings.

1. And first, as to the MOSAIC MIRACLES recorded in the Pentateuch: —

The plagues in Egypt *were witnessed* by the whole nation of the Israelites, and felt by all the Egyptians. — At the Red Sea the Israelites passed through, and beheld the whole host of Pharaoh perish. — During forty years were the children of Israel sustained with food from heaven. Sometimes they were supplied with water from the flinty rock; and throughout their journeys they beheld the cloud of the Lord on the tabernacle by day, and the fire by night. (Exod. xl. 38.) — At the passage over the Jordan "*the waters stood and rose up upon an heap; and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground in the midst of Jordan.*" (Josh. iii. 16, 17.) To each of the miracles here briefly enumerated, all the criteria above stated will be found to apply.

[i.] The posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, being chosen by Jehovah to be his peculiar people, for the preservation of true religion, the miracles performed in their behalf were unquestionably worthy of their Almighty Author. Here we have the FIRST mark.

[ii.] The miracles in question, though some of them (as the plagues in Egypt) were announced before they were actually performed, did actually and really take place in Egypt, and were removed only at the command of Moses, while the land of Goshen (in which the Israelites dwelt) was exempted from their operation. Here we have our SECOND, THIRD, and FOURTH marks most fully established; for all the miracles above mentioned were recorded by Moses at or about the time

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[1] Dr. Graves's "Essay on the Character of the Apostles and Evangelists, designed to prove that they were not Enthusiasts," pp, 287, 288.

when they actually took place: moreover, he recapitulated the miracles which he had wrought in Egypt and in the wilderness, and appealed to those who were present for the truth of them; which no wise man would have done, if he could have been confuted.

[iii.] Further, all these miracles were witnessed by upwards of two millions of persons, who remained collected in one camp for forty years; an assembly so great, probably, never before or since remained collected in one body for so long a period. If, then, this whole nation had not been entirely without eyes and ears, if they were not bereft of reason and sense, it was impossible, at the time these facts were said to have taken place, that they could have been persuaded of their existence, had they not been real.

[iv.] Once more, to commemorate the protection of the Israelites, when all the first-born of the Egyptians were destroyed, and their deliverance from bondage, which was its immediate consequence, Moses changed the beginning of their year to the month when this event happened, and instituted the feast of the passover. To this was added the solemn consecration of the first-born of man and beast to the Lord, with the following remarkable charge annexed:—"*And it shall be when thy children ask thee in time to come, saying, 'What is this?' thou shalt say to them, 'By strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt from the house of bondage: and it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man and the first-born of beast,—Therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix,*'" &c. (Exod. xiii. 14. 16.) All these things have been observed ever since, and establish the truth of the narration in the book of Exodus. In further commemoration of the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians, the tribe of Levi was set apart; and, besides the passover, the feast of tabernacles was instituted, to perpetuate the deliverance of the Israelites, and their journeying in the Desert (Lev. xxiii. 40. *et. seq.*); as the feast of Pentecost was appointed fifty days after the passover (Deut. xxvi. 5—10.), in memory of the miraculous deliverance of the law from Mount Sinai, which took place fifty days after their departure from Egypt. In all these instances we have our FIFTH and SIXTH criteria most clearly and decisively established.

[v.] The same remark will hold with respect to the miraculous supply of the Israelites with food, the memory of which was perpetuated by the pot of manna; and to the twelve stones which were taken out of the midst of Jordan, at the time of the miraculous passage of the Israelites over that river, and were set up by Joshua at Gilgal, as a memorial to them for ever. How irresistible is the reasoning of Mr. Leslie on this last monument! "To form our argument," says he, "let us suppose that there never was any such thing as that passage over Jordan; that the stones at Gilgal were set up upon some other occasion; and that some designing man in an after age invented this book of Joshua, affirmed that it was written at the time of that imaginary event by Joshua himself, and adduced this pile of stones as a testimony of the truth of it; would not every body say to him, 'We know this pile very well: but we never before heard of this reason for it, nor of this book of Joshua; where has it lain concealed all this while, and where and how came you, after so many ages, to find it? Besides, this book tells us, that this passage over Jordan was ordained to be taught our children from age to age, and therefore that they were always to be instructed in the meaning of this particular monument, as a memorial of it; but we were never taught it when we were children, nor did we ever teach our children any such thing; and it is in the highest degree improbable that such an emphatic ordinance should have been forgotten, during the continuance of so remarkable a pile set up for the express purpose of perpetuating its remembrance.' And if, where we know not the reason of a bare naked monument, a fictitious reason cannot be imposed; how much more is it impossible to impose upon us in actions and observances which we celebrate in memory of particular events! How impossible to make us forget those passages which we daily commemorate, and persuade us that we had always kept such institutions in memory of what we never heard of before; that is, that we knew it before we knew it! And if we find it thus impossible for an imposition to be put upon us, even in some things which have not all the marks before mentioned; how much more impossible is it that any deceit should be in that thing where ALL the marks do meet!"[1]

[1] Leslie's Short and Easy Method with the Deists, p. 22. 3d edit. The *reality* of the mira-

2. Secondly, the observations contained in the preceding pages apply with similar weight and propriety to the MIRACLES RECORDED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT; the number, variety, and greatness of which, as well as the persons *by* whom, the persons *before* whom, and the manner in which they were respectively performed, together with the effects produced by them, and the incontestable fact that their reality was never denied by those who witnessed them, or who, living near the time when they were performed, had the means as well as the inclination to deny them, if they had not been *actually* wrought, — are all so many indisputable proofs of the truth of the Christian revelation. If only one or two miracles had been wrought for this purpose, it might have been considered as a fortunate chance, which occurred at a convenient season; or, if Christ had performed them privately, and before his own disciples only, they may have been suspected by the rest of the world of fraud and imposition. But the reverse of all this was the actual fact; for,

(1). *The* NUMBER *of Christ's miracles was very great.*

If we consider only those which are recorded *at large*, they are between forty and fifty in number; and consequently the opportunities of examination were increased, and of deceit proportionably lessened. But it is evident that they must have been beyond all number, if we take into account the several instances in which we are told that *great multitudes* flocked to Jesus, who were afflicted with various diseases, for the most part incurable by human skill, and that *he healed them all;* and that thousands were fed by him with a few loaves and fishes. The Gospel, indeed, is full of the miracles of Christ; and one of his biographers informs us that he performed a greater number than are in any way recorded. But,

(2.) *There was a great* VARIETY *in the miracles recorded in the New Testament, which were of a permanent nature, and might be reviewed and re-examined, as in many instances we know they actually were.*

The VARIETY of Christ's miracles is a circumstance that claims our attention equally with their number. As no impostors ever pretended to perform a great number of miracles, so they always or usually limited themselves to one species of them. It was the number and variety of the miracles wrought by Moses, which at length convinced the Egyptian magicians that the power by which he wrought them was divine. From the variety of effects in the universe, we conclude the existence of an Almighty designing cause. One effect or two of different kinds, or a few of the same kind, may be inadvertently ascribed to chance; or it may be said, that the persons producing such effects possessed some extraordinary or peculiar skill in accomplishing them, or some peculiar art in imposing on men in respect of them. But a *variety* of effects, all mutually distinguished, and each perfect in its kind, suggests the idea of a perfect agent, powerful and designing, employed in producing them. And this is the case with the miracles of Christ; for, not one disease only,

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cles performed by Moses, and the impossibility of accounting for them by natural means, are ably vindicated by M. du Voisin, Autorité des Livres de Moyse, pp. 249—293. The various miracles, which are concisely noticed above, are considered in detail, and excellently illustrated, by Mr. Faber, in his Horæ Mosaicæ (vol. i. pp. 359—387.) and by Dr. Graves, in his Lectures on the four last books of the Pentateuch. (Vol. i. pp. 151—171.) In his appendix to the same volume (pp. 373—410.), Dr. G. has refuted the sceptical remarks of Dr. Geddes (who chiefly borrowed them from continental critics), which have been *re-asserted* by a modern opposer of divine revelation, as though they had never before been refuted. Dr. Collyer, in his Lectures on Scripture Miracles (p. 151. to the end), has also treated on the principal miracles recorded in the Old and New Testaments; and the miracles of the passage of the Red Sea, the sweetening of the waters of Marah, the supply of manna and of quails, the smiting of the rock in Horeb, and the supply of water, recorded by Moses, are satisfactorily vindicated from the attacks of rationalists and infidels, by Joseph Brown, M. D., in his Defence of Revealed Religion, pp. 95—117. London, 1851, 8vo.

but *all* are subject to the power of Christ and his apostles: not only diseases, but every calamity which is incident to mankind, are banished by their word; and even death, — the last enemy, — is obedient to them, and gives up his prey at their command, especially at the command of Christ. We behold him giving *sight* to the *born blind*, — healing the obstinate *leprosy*, — making those who *wanted* a limb[1] *perfect*, — those who were *bowed double* straight, — those who *shook* with the *palsy*, robust, — nerving the *withered* arm with *strength*, — restoring the *insane* and *demoniacs* to *reason*, and raising the dead to life. That great miracle of raising the dead, in particular, Christ performd no less than four times; once on the ruler's daughter, just *after* she had expired, — again, on the widow's son, as he was carried on his bier to be interred, — a third time on Lazarus when he had laid in his grave four days, — and lastly, the greatest instance of all, in himself. We behold the apostles also expelling demons, restoring the lame from his birth, giving sight to the blind, healing all manner of diseases, and giving life to the dead. These supernatural works were not performed in a *few* instances, with *hesitation* and *diffidence*; but *every week* and *every day* were witnesses to numerous instances of them for a successive series of *years*, so that all suspicion of human management, compact, and juggle, was for ever precluded. In short, not only man but every other being bows in ready subjection to their voice; not only animate but inanimate creatures, feel the power of God, and act contrary to their natures, at his will. — The winds, the waves, the rocks, the sun, the earth, the heavens, — all are the subjects of those who first introduced the Christian dispensation.

(3.) *The* DESIGN *of Christ's miracles was truly important, and every way worthy of their almighty Author.*

The very kinds of these miracles were foretold by the prophet Isaiah, *nearly seven centuries before*[2]; and if we reflect on the end and purpose for which these miracles were wrought, we find it grand and noble, full of dignity, majesty, and mercy. It was, to carry on one vast and consistent plan of Providence, extending from the creation to the consummation of all things, to establish a system of belief, hope, and practice, adapted to the actual wants and conditions of mankind; which had been revealed in part to the Jews, promised to the prophets, and tended to destroy the four great moral evils, — so prevalent and so pernicious, — viz. atheism, scepticism, immorality, and vice. In subservience to their grand object, — the confirmation of his divine mission, — the miracles of Christ were wrought for the most benevolent of all purposes, the alleviation of human misery in all its forms, and they carry in them the characters of the greatest goodness as well as of the greatest power. Most of them were performed in consequence of application or intreaty;

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[1] So κυλλοὺς signifies. It is a different word from χωλοὺς, and has a different signification. Both these words occur in Matt. xv. 31. κυλλοὺς ὑγιεῖς, χωλοὺς περιπατοῦντες. He made the *maimed* to be *whole*, those who *wanted* a limb, *perfect*, and the lame to walk. What an amazing instance of divine power, of *creative* energy, must the reproduction of a hand, foot, or other limb be, by the mere word or touch of Jesus! How astonishing to the spectators! That the above is the meaning of κυλλὸς, see Wetstein, Kypke, and Elsner on Matt. xv. 31.

[2] The circumstance of Christ's miracles being predicted so many years before the performance of them, is particularly worthy of notice. It removes all suspicion of any design to impose on the understandings of men, to sway them by the power of novelty, or to surprise them by a species of proof, of which they had never before heard. In this respect the miracles of Jesus have a great advantage over those of Moses. When Moses appeared, the notion of a miracle must have been new and unprecedented; allowing this, there was no impropriety in the use of miracles among a rude, uncivilised people. But, when the world became more polished, and, by the frequency of imposture, more suspicious and inquisitive, it was highly proper that the species of proof, by which any new system was confirmed, should be previously notified, or be such as men had been in the habit of attending to. This applied particularly to the Jews, the witnesses of the miracles of Jesus. They were much prepossessed against him; and it was of importance that the proof from this quarter should appear in the most unexceptionable light. Jesus had this in view, in the answer given to the disciples of John the Baptist, when they inquired if he was the Christ. He directs them to his miracles, in proof that he was, and appeals to the predictions of the same prophet who had described the character and actions of their Master. Compare Isa. xxix. 18, 19., xxxv. 4—6., and lxi. 1. with Matt. xi. 4, 5. and Mark vii. 37.

and, on these occasions, the character and conduct of Jesus appear, adorned with the most delicate expressions of compliance and piety.

[i.] The instances of the leper, who applied for himself, as Jesus came down from the mountain (Matt. viii. 3.); — of the centurion, applying for a favourite servant (viii. 8.); — of the sick of the palsy, brought in his bed, and let down by the roof (Luke v. 18.); — and of the ruler, whose daughter lay at the point of death, and expired before his arrival (Luke viii. 41.); — are all so many occasions which display that divine compassion, which was ever open to the cries of the miserable; — a compassion surmounting every obstacle, unconquerable by opposition, and with dignity triumphing over it. The circumstances of the last-mentioned application are remarkably beautiful. We see a ruler of the synagogue falling down at the feet of Jesus, beseeching him to come into his house; the more importunate in his intreaty, as probably he had been either an enemy, or liable to the imputation of being one, and, on that account, also, the more doubtful of success; to crown all, his case was pitiable and pressing: *He had one only daughter about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying.* As Jesus went to the house, the people crowded about him, and in the throng a most compasionate cure was wrought, only by touching the hem of his garment. In the mean time the young woman expires, and messages are sent to prevent his taking any further trouble. This new distress has the effect of heightening the compasionate favour. It instantly drew forth from the mouth of Jesus that reviving declaration, the prelude of the miracle: *Fear not, believe only, and she shall be made whole.* (Luke viii. 50.)

[ii.] Beautiful as these instances are, yet they yield to others, where Jesus wrought his miracles without application. To prevent intreaty, to watch for opportunity of doing good to others, is the very essence of a benevolent character, and is the perfection of an amiable one. The miraculous draught of fishes (Luke v. 1.) is perhaps one of the lowest of these instances. We cannot suppose that the disciples could either ask or expect such an appearance in their favour. But, as the miracle, by its greatness, was fitted to inspire every sentiment of respect; so the occasion of working it served to give a full opening into the indulgent character of their Master at the moment of his calling them. His entering soon after into Peter's house, and healing his wife's mother, who lay sick of a fever (Matt. viii. 14.), was also an act of indulgence, and peculiarly fitted to secure the attachment of this zealous disciple. The feeding of thousands miraculously with a few loaves and fishes, gives a happy and striking instance of an attention descending to the most ordinary wants of men. The cases of dispossession have the most humane aspect, where the misery was great, and no application supposable, nor any desire of relief, on the part of the persons possessed.

[iii.] There are two instances of such distress as every day occur, in which we see Jesus interposing, unasked, with the most exquisite sensibility. One is a case of infirm old age; the other of youth cut off in its bloom; distresses mortifying to the pride of man, and always deeply affecting to a generous mind. *Wilt thou be made whole?* says Jesus to the old man lying at the pool of Bethesda. (John v. 6.) The helplessness of distressed old age cannot be painted in more lively colours, than in the simple account which the man gives of himself; and never was relief dispensed with more grace and dignity: *Jesus saith to him, Rise, take up thy bed and walk.* (John v. 8.) The other distress is still of a more tender kind, the untimely death of an only son; a distress always great, but on the present occasion heightened by the concurrence of affecting circumstances. Jesus *went into a city called Nain. Now, when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And much people of the city was with her.* (Luke vii. 11, 12.) In attending to the narration, we sympathise deeply with the distress of the sorrowful mother, we even participate in the sympathy and sorrow of the attendants. Such a distress was adapted to the divine pity of Jesus. *When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not* (Luke vii. 13.); *and he came and touched the bier, and said, Young man, arise.* (14.) And, lest the immediate object of the miracle should escape us, the historian concludes the account of it with observing, that Jesus *delivered him to his mother.* (15.) Great actions in ordinary life have often much of the terrible in them; if they have beauties, yet they are usually of the awful kind; but, in the miracles of Jesus, there is nothing alarming; they were hurtful to none, and beneficial to all who felt their influence. We naturally wish ourselves to have been spectators of those

agreeable scenes. This was the charm which overpowered the stupidity or prejudices of the multitudes, when the other charms of the miracles seemed to have operated faintly. On occasion of one of the lowest exertions, the multitude was capable of making the following reflection: *He hath done all things well; he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.*[1]

"Compare with these evangelical miracles the pagan miracles, as delivered to us by report, or the ecclesiastical miracles after the church was supported by the state: — but there is *no* comparison. The latter were usually such as would make fools stare, and wise men suspect; and as they began, so they ended in vain, — establishing nothing, or what was worse than nothing; if false, the tricks of deceitful men; if true, the frolics of fantastical demons."[2]

In short, the miracles of Christ had nothing in them fantastical or cruel, but were glorious acts of kindness and beneficence, done to persons to whom it is usually least done, but who most needed his kindness and beneficence, — the poor, the needy, the desolate, and the afflicted. They were, moreover, calculated to excite gratitude rather than fear, and to persuade rather than to terrify. Jesus performed no miracles of the severe kind, and the apostles very few, — no more indeed than were necessary for wise and good purposes, viz. the detection and the punishment of sin and hypocrisy in the infant state of the Christian church.

Of the vast multitude of miracles performed by Jesus Christ, there are only two which carry in them any marks of severity, namely, his suffering the demons to enter the herd of swine, in consequence of which the whole herd perished in the waters; and his causing the barren fig-tree to wither away.

[i.] With regard to the destruction of the swine (Matt. viii. 28—34.; Mark v. 12—17.), it should be considered that Jesus did not, properly speaking, command or do this, but only suffered it to be done; and it is no more an impeachment of his goodness that he suffered this to be done, than it is of the providence of the Almighty, that he permits any evil to be committed in the world. Jesus might suffer this, perhaps, to show the great power and malice of evil spirits if not restrained by Omnipotence; perhaps if the Jews were the owners of the swine, to punish them for keeping such animals in direct violation of the Mosaic institute, which forbad the eating of swine, and even the keeping of them; or, perhaps, if the owners of them were Gentiles, to convince them of the sacredness and divinity of the Jewish laws, which (it is well known) they ridiculed on many accounts, and especially for the prohibition of eating swine's flesh; and farther, it may be, to punish them for laying a snare in the way of the Jews. But, whoever they were that sustained this loss, they seemed to have deserved it for their covetous and inhuman temper; for they were not so much pleased with the good that was done to the afflicted man, as they were offended with the loss of the swine; and, instead of being awakened by so great a miracle to confess their sins, and revere the power of Christ, they desired him immediately to depart out of their coasts. They could not but be sensible that he, who had wrought this miracle among them, must be a divine person; yet, because they had sustained some loss by it, they never applied to him for mercy, but sent him away, and thus showed themselves still more worthy of the punishment that had been inflicted upon them.

[ii.] In causing the barren fig-tree to wither away (Matt. xxi. 19.; Mark. xi. 14. 21.), Jesus neither invaded private property, nor did any injury to the community at large; and though this is alleged as a severe miracle, the allegation is not to

[1] Dr. David Hunter's Observations on the History of Jesus Christ, vol. i. pp. 286—291 Edinburgh, 1770.

[2] Dr. Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. i. p. 266. 2d edit.

the purpose. For, as the fig-tree was not an animated being, so it was not, in a proper sense, capable of being kindly or unkindly treated, but was a proper and strong figurative representation of the Jewish people. But the lesson, which this action dictated to his disciples, and now dictates to us, is of the first importance to every man alive, — to the deist as well as to the believer. If the opportunities which God has given us for our improvement in religious knowledge and the purification of our affections, be neglected or misemployed; — if we be found unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and in good works, — which are the fruits of faith in him, we must expect to be withered like the barren fig-tree, before the fiery blast of his displeasure, when he cometh to judge the earth.[1]

There were good reasons, therefore, for Christ's severity in these two cases; but in all other instances he was perfect goodness and benevolence. "He went about doing good." He was the greatest physician to bodies as well as souls; his constant employment was, feeding the hungry, healing the sick, casting out demons[2], and raising the dead. The first of his miracles was at a wedding, converting water into wine, thus sanctioning the sacred institution of marriage, and at the same time showing that he was no enemy to innocent festivity; and one of the last was restoring the ear of the high priest's servant which Peter had cut off. The Gospel was a covenant of mercy, and it could not be better ratified and confirmed than by acts of mercy.

(4.) *Consider further the* GREATNESS *of Christ's miracles.*

If any actions can be called miraculous, those of Jesus are indisputably so. In the simplest instances of cures performed; we always find some circumstances fixing this point, — such as, that the disease was in its nature incurable, that it was inveterate, and had baffled every effort of art; that it was instantaneously removed, by a single word, sometimes without it, sometimes by touch, or by applications, from which in a natural way no relief was to be expected, — for example, anointing *with clay* the eyes of a man born blind. In the higher instances of exertion, such as raising the dead, we have no difficulty in determining them to have been miraculous. To explain them in any other way. is an attempt which must terminate in confusion and absurdity, on which account very few have ever engaged in it. But it is of consequence to observe, that works so great could never have been admitted as true, by a scrupulous and inquisitive age, had there been any doubt of their certainty. Their GREATNESS, which all had occasion to know, and which no one ever contradicted (as will be shown in a subsequent page), secures them against the suspicion of imposture. Impostors seldom deal in great tricks; this would offend too much against probability, and prompt men to an investigation. They usually satisfy themselves with little tricks, because they are less open to suspicion, and more easily gain credit.

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[1] The above, doubtless, was the general design of the emblem of the barren fig-tree. It was usual, among the people of the East, to designate things by actions; and there are frequent instances of this nature in the prophets of the Old Testament. In like manner, Jesus Christ, by a familiar type, gave the Jews to understand what they must expect for making only a formal profession of religion: — *The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.* (Matt. xxi. 43.) This figure of the fig-tree was employed by Christ more than once to the same purpose, as may be seen in the parable related in Luke xiii. 6—9. In Matt. xxi. 19. and Mark xi. 14. 21. it is by way of type; there, by way of parable: here the malediction is executed upon it; there it is denounced (ver. 7.) — *Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?*

[2] There was a peculiar propriety in Jesus casting out evil spirits, which, by Divine Providence, were permitted to exert themselves at that time, and to possess many persons. "By this he showed that he came to destroy the empire of Satan, and seemed to foretell that, wheresoever his doctrine should prevail, idolatry and vice should be put to flight. He foresaw that the great and popular objection to him would be, that he was a magician; and therefore he confuted it beforehand, and ejected evil spirits, to show that he was in no confederacy with them." Jortin's Rem. on Eccl. Hist. vol. i. p. 268.

(5.) *Observe also the* PERSONS, *by whom these miracles were accomplished.*

They were wrought by persons who were known to be poor, unlearned, of low condition, and destitute of great friends and powerful patrons; who gave other proofs of their mission, and did not rest the *whole* of their cause upon miracles, but who likewise insisted upon the reasonableness of their doctrines, which they offered to examination. Further, they were wrought by persons who appealed to God, and declared that they would perform them. By acting in the name of the God and Father of all, they gave the best kind of proof that they were supported by him, and thus prevented objections that the wonder might happen by chance, or be effected by a secret fatal power, of which they themselves knew nothing, or by evil spirits, or for other ends and purposes; and they laid themselves under a necessity of fulfilling their promises, or of passing for men who either deceived others or were deceived themselves. But Jesus Christ and his apostles were not the only persons "who confidently appealed to the evidence of miracles, in the very face of their enemies; thus daring them, as it were, to a detection of imposture, if any imposture had existed. There was a class of writers in the primitive church who composed what were styled APOLOGIES." (Some of these Apologies have already been cited.) They "were addressed to the pagans; and it was their avowed design to defend Christianity, and to vindicate the reception of it.

"The oldest writer of this description with whose works we are at all acquainted is QUADRATUS. He lived about seventy years after the death of Christ, and presented his *Apology* to the emperor Adrian. A passage of it has been preserved by Eusebius; from which it appears, that he formally and confidently appealed to the miracles of Christ, as a matter which admitted not of the least doubt or controversy. 'The works of our Saviour,' says he, 'were always conspicuous, for they were real. Both they that were healed, and they that were raised from the dead, were seen, not only when they were healed or raised, but for a long time afterwards; not only whilst he dwelt on this earth, but also after his departure and for a good while subsequent to it; insomuch that some of them have reached to our times.'[1]

"To the same purpose speaks JUSTIN MARTYR, who followed Quadratus at the distance of about thirty years.—'Christ healed those, who from their birth were blind and deaf and lame; causing by his word, one to leap, another to hear, and a third to see; and, having raised the dead and caused them to live, he, by his works, excited attention, and induced the men of that age to know him. Who, however, seeing these things done, said that it was a magical appearance, and dared to call him a magician and a deceiver of the people.'[2]

"Next in chronological order follows TERTULLIAN, who flourished during the same century with Justin Martyr.—'That person, whom the Jews had vainly imagined, from the meanness of his appearance, to be a mere man, they afterwards, in consequence of the power which he exerted, considered as a magician: when he, with one word, ejected devils out of the bodies of men, gave sight to the blind, cleansed the leprous, strengthened the nerves of those that had the palsy, and lastly, with one command, raised the dead; when he, I say, made the very elements obey him, assuaged the storms, and walked upon the seas, demonstrating himself to be the Word of God.'[3]

"We may finally notice ORIGEN, who lived in the third century, and who published a regular defence of Christianity against the philosopher Celsus.—'Undoubtedly we do think him to be the Christ and the Son of God, because he healed the lame and the blind; and we are the more confirmed in this persuasion by what is written in the prophecies: Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear, and the lame man shall leap as an hart. But, that he also raised the dead, and that it is not a fiction of those who wrote the Gospels, is evident from hence; that, if it had been a fiction, there would have been many recorded to be raised up, and such as had been a long time in their graves. But it not being a fiction, few have been recorded."[4]

"That the defenders of Christianity should thus needlessly commit themselves to

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[1] Quadrat. Apol. apud Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. c. 3.
[2] Just. Mart. Dial. p. 258. edit. Thirlby.
[3] Tertul. Apol. p. 20. ed. Prior. Par. 1675.
[4] Orig. cont. Cels. lib. ii. § 48.

the hostile pagans, if no miracles had been performed, and when a regular confutation of the r pretences was perfectly easy, it is alike difficult to account for and hard to believe."[1]

(6.) *The persons* BEFORE *whom the miracles were wrought claim our especial notice.*

These astonishing actions were not performed in sequestered cells or solitudes, cautiously shunning the light of truth, and the scrutiny of officious inquiries. They were wrought in a learned age and in civilised countries, in the politest and best inhabited parts of the world, where persons are not easily deluded. It is worthy of remark, that, when Christianity was published, a general prejudice in the people, and a very severe suspicion in the government, prevailed against the belief of miracles. They were stigmatised by the opprobrious name of *magic;* and Augustus, it is well known, had published very rigorous edicts against the whole race of *præstigiators* or jugglers. Further, the Christian miracles were exhibited in the face of day, before vast multitudes of friends and enemies indiscriminately, to whose *calm* and *deliberate* investigation they were submitted; and at a time, when men wanted neither power nor inclination to expose them if they were impostures, and who were in no danger of being called atheists for disbelieving them, and of being insulted by the populace and persecuted by the civil magistrate for deriding them. The miracles of Christ and his apostles were witnessed by thousands, who would have rejoiced in the detection of imposture, had any been attempted or practised, and who scrutinised both them and the persons on whom they were wrought, with the nicest subtilty and strictest accuracy, in order (if possible) to discover any fraud or falsehood in them. The persons who had experienced these miraculous effects, and who had been cured of blindness, leprosy, palsy, or lameness, or who had had lost limbs restored to them, or who had been raised from the dead, — these persons lived many years afterwards, — public monuments of them, — and carrying about with them, in their own persons, the full conviction of these amazing operations.[2]

(7.) *The* MANNER, *too, in which these miracles were performed, is equally worthy of attention, for its publicity, simplicity, and disinterestedness.*

• [i.] As the miracles of Christ and his apostles were numerous, diversified, and great, so they were wrought OPENLY and PUBLICLY, without concealment or disguise, which is a circumstance necessary to establish their credit.

Pagan antiquity furnishes us with accounts of pretended miracles, and of pretended miraculous intercourses between men and their deities; but the scene of them is always laid out of the reach of observation and discovery. Modern miracles also have in a great measure owed their being to the same source. When Jesus began to work miracles, he did not retire into deserts and corners, as if there had been something in the operation to be kept secret, or which, if disclosed, would bring the whole into discredit. But as he appeared in the world on purpose to instruct it, and as his doctrine was for this purpose delivered in public, so his miracles, which were chiefly exhibited for the support of the doctrine, were public also; being performed in the most frequented places and on the most public occasions, as at marriages and funerals, and on solemn festivals. Thus, many were done at Jerusalem, at the times of the great festivals, when there was the greatest concourse of people from all parts of the country; others, in the public streets of villages and cities; others, in the public synagogues; and others, before great multitudes, who came together to hear Jesus, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. By far the greater part of his miracles were wrought in the vicinity of the sea of Galilee, which was surrounded by large, fertile, and populous tracts, especially the two Galilees, containing many towns, and a multitude of villages, the least of which towns (Josephus informs us) contained upwards of *fifteen thousand souls.*[3] Some

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[1] Faber's Difficulties of Infidelity, pp. 230—232.

[2] Quadratus, in the passage above cited, says, that there were persons living even in his time, upon whom Christ had wrought miracles. (See Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. c. 3.) And it is by no means improbable that some of those, who were cured of their infirmities, or raised from the dead by Jesus Christ, were preserved by Providence to extreme old age, to be living witnesses of his power and goodness.

[3] Josephus, de Bell. Jud. lib. iii. c. 3. § 2.

of Christ's miracles, indeed, were, from their nature, more private than others[1]; yet privacy was never industriously sought after, except where the reasons of it are obvious. But an instance or two of this kind cannot be supposed to invalidate the credibility of great numbers openly performed. Considering the opposition of the world, it would not have been unreasonable, had the miracles of Jesus been less public; in some cases he might have changed his ordinary manner with propriety: but, to the last, he persisted in it, for instance, at the resurrection of his friend Lazarus, only a little before his own death. The openness of the miracles was therefore a defiance to the malice, and a defiance to the incredulity of the world; it being as true of his miracles as he asserted it to be of his doctrine: — *I spake openly,* said Christ, *to the world. I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort: and in secret have I said nothing.* (John xviii. 20.)

The miracles of Christ and his apostles were accompanied with no appearance of pride, vanity, or ostentation. When a man preaches up himself, and assumes haughty airs of importance and superiority, he gives cause for suspicion. Such was the case of Simon the Sorcerer, as represented by Luke (Acts viii. 9.), whose principal design seems to have been that he might pass for a very great person among the Samaritans. But the conduct of the apostles in this respect was unexceptionable; and Jesus, during his ministry, acted as a servant and as a prophet sent from God, ascribing all his miracles to his Father. While, however, Christ's manner was totally free from ostentation, his miracles were characterised by a peculiar sobriety, decorum, authority, and dignity. They display something above the ordinary character of man, but they are *facts* in which the spectators could not be mistaken.

[ii.] All the miracles of Christ were performed with the utmost SIMPLICITY OF MANNER.

They are often, to all appearance, casual and incidental. At other times he wrought his miracles when prompted by intreaty, or where such an occasion presented itself that it would have been out of character not to have wrought them. The manner of his doing them is remote from all suspicion of deceit or vainglory. As no ostentation is displayed before, so none is evinced after, the performance. Often he forbad those[2] who were the objects of his goodness and compassion to speak of the person to whom they were obliged, — a hard prohibition to a grateful mind! Often, as soon as the work was accomplished, he withdrew into some private retreat. This circumstance strengthens the credibility of the miracles; but it does more, — it exhibits them in their native beauty and dignity. It is, indeed, difficult to say, whether the ease or the dignity of the manner is most strongly expressed. To expel diseases by a single word, sometimes without one; by a word to command the winds and waves; by a word to raise the dead bodies of men, sometimes almost from corruption, — are appearances which surpass all that we can imagine.

[iii.] The DISINTERESTEDNESS with which the miracles of Christ and his apostles were wrought is another circumstance that demands our consideration.

They were performed for no wordly advantage. As nothing of that kind was sought, so nothing was obtained by Christ and by his disciples. When he first sent them forth, he expressly commanded them to take no fee or gratuity for the miracles they were about to work. *Freely,* said he, *ye have received; freely give.* (Matt. x. 8.) Obscure, indeed, they could not be who were endued with such powers, nor could they be despised by their friends and followers; but these were small temporal advantages, in comparison of the obloquy, the injuries, afflictions, sufferings, and persecutions of every possible kind, which they underwent. The miracles of Christ were wrought in the most generous and disinterested manner: all were welcome to partake of the benefit of them; and no distinction was made between the rich and the poor. The only exception was, that Christ and his apostles would not work miracles to gratify curiosity or to sanction unbelief. Should the question

[1] When it happened that any of them were performed privately, in a house or chamber, the effects of the miracle were so visible, that they could not but be observed by great numbers, as in the instance of the raising of Jairus's daughter to life.

[2] See the reason why Jesus sometimes enjoined secrecy on those whom he had healed, *suprà*, pp. 216, 217.

be asked, why Jesus did not perform *more* miracles before the unbelieving? we reply, that such conduct was not necessary to the end of miracles, which was, to afford a *reasonable* conviction; — that it was not likely to answer any good end, but, on the contrary, would have been hurtful to such unbelievers; — that it tended to defeat the design and success of Christ's ministry, by narrowing its sphere, or shortening its duration; — and that, lastly and chiefly, it was unreasonable in itself, and contrary to the general scheme and order of God's moral government.[1]

(8.) Another circumstance which confirms the truth and validity of these miracles, is the EFFECTS *produced by the performance of them.*

Great numbers of persons, who were spectators of them, were convinced by them, notwithstanding they had formed and cherished the strongest prejudices against the religion attested by these miracles. In consequence of this conviction, they quitted the religion in which they had been educated, and with it ease, pleasure, fortune, reputation, friends, and relations; they embraced the Gospel from the most indubitable persuasion of its truth, inviolably adhered to the profession of it, and sealed their belief of it with their blood.

(9.) Lastly, so far were the miracles of Christ and his apostles from being considered as frauds or impostures, that their REALITY *was never denied.*

The length of time, during which Jesus Christ and his apostles performed their miracles, must here be specially considered. "*Seventy years* elapsed between the commencement of the ministry of Christ and the death of the last of the apostles. During all this interval, the miraculous gifts in question were exercised. Now, as every repetition in case of imposture multiplies the dangers of detection, and every extension of time makes it the more difficult to keep up the confederated plan, it is no inconsiderable evidence of the genuineness of the miracles of the Gospel, that they continued to be wrought and inspected during a period of so many years, and yet no instance of a failure or of deception was ever discovered by those fierce and untiring enemies with whom Christianity was always surrounded."[2] In fact, both Jews[3] and heathens were constrained to admit them; though they ascribed them to various causes, denied them to be proofs of his divinity, or maintained that they were inferior to the miracles of the pagans. Thus, on one occasion, the Jews attributed Christ's miracles to Beelzebub, and on another, they acknowledged that he saved others, while they reproached him with not being able to save himself. While the facts were too recent to be disputed, Celsus[4], Porphyry, Hierocles, Julian, and other adversaries, admitted their reality, but ascribed them to magic, and denied the divine commission of him who performed them. But to whatever cause they ascribed them, their admission of the reality of these miracles is an involuntary confession that there was something preternatural in them.

VIII. A brief examination of a few of the miracles related in the New Testament (more than a few cannot be investigated for want of room) will confirm and illustrate the preceding observations; convince every *candid* inquirer that they were wrought by the mighty power

[1] The topics above briefly noticed are illustrated with equal force and beauty of argument by Bp. Hurd. Works, vol. vii. Serm. 39. pp. 158—175.

[2] Bp. M'Ilvaine's (of Ohio) Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, p. 159. (London, 1833.)

[3] *This man doeth* MANY MIRACLES (John xi. 47.), was the judgment of the chief priests and Pharisees, assembled in council. And, *Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by wonders and* MIRACLES *and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves know* (Acts ii. 22.), was the appeal of Peter to a mixed multitude of the men of Israel. — *What shall we do to these men? For that indeed a notable* MIRACLE *hath been done by them, is manifest to all them that dwell at Jerusalem, and* WE CANNOT DENY *it* (Acts iv. 16.), was the acknowledgment extorted from the Jewish rulers, in consequence of the miracle wrought by Peter and John on the lame man at the gate of the temple in that city. For the involuntary acknowledgment of Jewish and heathen adversaries, see pp. 168, 169. 173—175. of this vol.

[4] On the evasions to which Celsus had recourse in order to elude the reality of Christ's miracles, the reader will find some forcible remarks in Mr. Cumberland's Observer, vol. i. no. 12.

of God; and thus prove incontestably that Jesus Christ was indeed the promised Messiah.

1. *The* MIRACLE OF THE CONVERSION OF WATER INTO WINE *at Cana, in Galilee, is related with every mark of veracity.* (John ii. 1—10.)

The absence of all collusion could not be more happily implied than by the manner in which the discovery is signified to the company. The Jewish weddings, it should be observed, lasted seven days. During the continuance of the nuptial feast, from the poverty of the bridegroom and bride, or perhaps from the number of guests being greater than was expected, there was a deficiency of wine. This being made known to Jesus, he commanded the servants to fill six large vessels with water *up to the brim.* It was therefore impossible to intermix any wine. The servants alone were privy to the *process* of the miracle, and were desired by Jesus to carry some of the new wine to the governor of the feast. The wine proves excellent, therefore it is not counterfeited; there is *now* plenty, and there *was* need of it. According to the practice usual among the Jews on these occasions, which is mentioned also by the governor, the wine which the guests had been drinking last was not remarkable for excellence. His attention was immediately excited by this fresh supply; and he gives his attestation to it in so natural and easy a way, that we cannot but esteem it beyond the reach of any artifice and ingenuity whatsoever. He called the bridegroom and said,— *Every man at the beginning bringeth forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now.* This incidental testimony carries with it all the air of authenticity which could possibly be derived from the unaffected mention of such a circumstance.[1] The miracle became public, and confirmed the faith of the new disciples of Jesus Christ.

2. *The* MIRACULOUS FEEDING OF FIVE THOUSAND MEN, *besides women and children, in the desert*[2], *was attended with a variety of circumstances that show the impossibility of falsehood or imposition.*

The disciples of Christ informed their compassionate Master, that it was time to dismiss the people to the neighbouring villages to buy food. Jesus found, on inquiry, that there was no more provision than five loaves and two fishes. The want of food for such a multitude was certain, and the means of supplying it appeared to be impossible. He commanded the disciples to make the people to sit down upon the grass[3], and to place them in ranks by hundreds and by fifties. By this method, all confusion was avoided, and the attendance upon them was rendered more easy: besides, the miraculous operation was thus exposed to the view of the whole multitude; so that it was impossible to deceive them by any artifice or sleight of hand. Jesus brake the five loaves and two fishes and distributed them to the apostles, who again distributed to the people. "This small supply of provision was perceived to multiply and grow, either in the hands of the apostles as they were ministering them to the people, or in the hands of the people themselves, who, in all probability, saw the small fragments of bread or fish, with which they had been presented, visibly increase while they held them in their hands; till the hunger of each was fully satisfied, and sufficient was still left for others who might come after them."[4] In this miracle "there was no room either for collusion or deception. Two vast multitudes of both sexes and all ages, accidentally collected together, could not all have been confederates; and, as for any collusion on the part of the disciples alone, the thing was palpably impossible. Food, naturally sufficient for five thousand men only (women and children being excluded), at the rate of a pound weight to each man, would considerably exceed two tons. To convey this food to the place where the multitude was assembled, would at the least require two stout carts. But these carts could not be brought unseen to the place of meeting; and if the people had merely seen the disciples serving them with the food from the carts (which they clearly must have done, had such an action ever really taken

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[1] Wakefield's Internal Evidences of Christianity, p. 112.

[2] Matt. xiv. 15—21.; Mark vi. 35—44.; John vi. 5—13.

[3] The observation of the evangelist (*Now there was much grass in the place*, John vi. 9.), not only shows that he was an eye-witness of the miracle, but also indicates the *time* when it was performed, viz. in the month of February or March, when the grass is at its perfection in Syria. Macknight. *in loc.*

[4] Townsend's New Testament arranged, &c. vol. i. p. 260.

place), nothing could have persuaded them that a miracle had been wrought, and that they had all been fed from only five loaves and two fishes, which some one happened to have brought with him in a wallet. Collusion, therefore, in the present instance is manifestly impossible. Equally impossible also is deception. No sleight of hand, no dexterity of juggling, could convince a fasting multitude that they had all eaten and were satisfied. Hunger would be too potent for imposture. Not a single man, woman, or child, would be persuaded that they had eaten a hearty meal, if, all the while, they had received no sustenance."[1] Moreover, after the multitude had eaten, Christ commanded the apostles to gather up the fragments, which was a plain proof that they had had plenty of food; and the disciples filled twelve baskets with the fragments that remained. After this, can there be the least room for incredulity?

The people, struck with a miracle, in itself so astonishing, and in which they were so deeply interested, were convinced that he was the prophet promised by the Almighty to succeed Moses (Deut. xviii. 15.), and they were desirous to make him a king, because the Messiah (according to their notions) was entitled to the same sovereignty as other princes, and to rule over Israel as David and Solomon had done. This circumstance is a further proof of the miracle, and of the impression it had made on every person's mind who had witnessed it. Lastly, on the next day, Jesus Christ being at Capernaum, and speaking to the same people, who were still amazed at the miracle which he had performed, rebuked them for being sensible only of its temporal effects, while they neglected to apply it to their eternal salvation. This reproach not only establishes the miracle, but also gives it additional dignity, by exhibiting the design which Jesus chiefly had in view in performing it, viz. his heavenly doctrine. It is, therefore, impossible, either to oppose such strong evidence, or to lessen the credit of a miracle which had the testimony of nearly or quite eight thousand persons (reckoning the women and children at 2500 or 3000), and which is so necessarily connected with other facts equally public and true.

The same remarks are applicable to the subsequent feeding of four thousand men besides women and children, related in Matt. xv. 32—38.

3. *Equally remarkable are the circumstances attending the* Recovery of Simon Peter's wife's mother from fever (Matt. viii. 14, 15.; Mark v. 29—31.; Luke iv. 38, 39.), *and the* Healing of the Paralytic (Matt. ix. 2—8.; Mark ii. 3—12.; Luke v. 18—26.), *which are such as to convince every reasonable person.*

[i.] The healing of Peter's mother-in-law of a violent fever, so far as the proof of the miracle is concerned, is related in the same terms by the evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. "In the description of the fever, there is displayed that substantial agreement with circumstantial variety, which is the best evidence of the truth of testimony when derived from different individuals, of different characters or professions. Matthew and Mark, the non-medical men, merely say, that she *was sick of a fever;* but Luke, the physician, tells us what kind of fever it was, employing the technical language. He says that it was a *great fever*, or, as we should call it, a severe or violent fever.[2] But fevers often have their periods of spontaneous cessation, called critical periods; and the objection might be taken to the miraculous character of the cure, that Jesus Christ might have entered Peter's house at the precise moment when the fever had quitted his mother-in-law. But this objection is set at rest by certain words which follow, and which, having reference to a plain matter of fact, of which observers, however different in character or profession, could not take different views, stand alike in all these Gospels. She is stated, when the fever left her on Christ's rebuking it, *immediately* to have risen, and to have *ministered unto them*, that is, served or waited on the family and on Jesus Christ and his apostles. Now all who know anything of fevers, and especially of the fevers of such a climate as Judea[3], know that to have done this immediately on the cessation of the fever (whether spontaneous or effected by human art) was an impossibility. Days, or even weeks, must have elapsed before strength could have been restored so as to admit of this. It is evident, then, that not only did the fever cease when Jesus Christ rebuked it; but that Peter's mother-in-law was

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[1] Faber's Difficulties of Infidelity, p. 241.

[2] It is the custom of physicians to divide fevers into the severe and mild kinds: *Τὸν μέγαν τε καὶ μικρὸν πυρετόν.* Galen on Fevers, book i. c. 1.

[3] The fever prevailing in the climate of Judea is the bilious remittent, very violent, very dangerous, and even more exhausting than our typhus.

instantly restored to such a degree of strength as only almighty power could at once have imparted."[1]

[ii.] The miraculous healing of the paralytic was wrought in the presence of many witnesses, some of whom were secretly enemies to Christ, and jealous of his fame. The manner in which they presented the sick of the palsy is unparalleled, and, at the same time, shows the confidence they placed in his power and goodness, as well as the desire of the paralytic, and of the four men who bore him on his bed or couch. *When they could not come nigh because of the multitude, they went up on the house-top, and uncovered the roof* of the apartment *where Jesus was: and when they had broken it up, they let him down through the tiling, with his couch, into the midst before Jesus.* The manner in which he addressed the paralytic is still more striking. Jesus began with the remission of his sins (which did not seem to be the object of the man's petition) without saying anything of his malady, with which both he and his supporters were wholly affected. *Jesus seeing their faith, saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the Scribes and Pharisees sitting there; and, reasoning in their hearts, they said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.* This secret accusation of blasphemy, on the part of the Scribes and Pharisees, proves that they had no idea of any such thing before the event: Jesus, after replying to the reasonings in their hearts, commanded the man to take up his couch and walk. *And* IMMEDIATELY *he rose up before them all, and took up the bed whereon he lay, and departed to his own house glorifying God.* The astonishing nature of this miracle extorted the admiration of all who beheld it, and they exclaimed, *We never saw it on this fashion.*

4. While the miracles of Jesus were acts of benevolence and compassion, they, at the same time, served to convey his instructions with the greater meaning and dignity.

To overturn prejudices fostered by false notions of religion, strengthened by age, and sanctioned by the example of persons in authority, and to substitute good principles in their place, must be a matter of great delicacy, and will always require the most vigorous exertions. This was the great object of the parables of Jesus: it was a principal object of his whole ministry, and, with infinite propriety, entered into his miracles. The prejudices of the Jews against his person, among other things, made it necessary that he should work miracles. There were also prejudices so deeply rooted in the minds of the Jews, that no power less than that of miracles could be supposed to combat them with any probability of success, and against which we find particular miracles opposed. That calamities are always the offspring of crimes is one prejudice which the depraved nature of man is but too prone to indulge; and the Jews, in the time of Christ, were greatly under the power of this prejudice. We are told, in the gospel history, of some who came to Jesus under this influence, telling him of certain Galilæans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices (Luke xiii. 1.); and, on that occasion, he exposed the danger and absurdity of the error by a plain illustration. On occasion of seeing a man who had been born blind, the disciples of Jesus fell into the same mistake, and *asked him, Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?* (John ix. 1, 2.) Jesus, in a moment, solved the difficulty, by giving him the use of his sight. He did so without going out of his ordinary course. Miracles were a part of his work, and his compassion always prompted him; but the occasion called for an extraordinary interposition, and the miraculous cure was the most effectual expedient for forcing an access to hearts fenced by prejudice against the common feelings of humanity.

The MIRACLE OF GIVING SIGHT TO THE MAN WHO HAD BEEN BORN BLIND, *related in the ninth chapter of the Gospel of John,* is one of the most illustrious miracles wrought by Christ, on account of the reluctant but distinct testimony to its reality, which was given by the Jews, after they had done every thing in their power (though without success) to discover, if possible, any circumstance which could have enabled them to question or deny it.

As this miracle has been the subject of particular cavil by Rousseau, on the ground that there is a gradation in it which does not suit with a supernatural operation or miracle (two of whose characters or criteria are *instantaneity* in its performance, and *independence on second causes*); and as the cavil of that eloquent but seductive and

[1] Dr. Brown's Defence of Revealed Religion, pp. 225, 226.

licentious infidel has been adopted, without acknowledgment, by later opposers of revelation, it demands a distinct examination.

Taking it for granted that the reader has perused the narrative in question, the noble simplicity of which, together with its circumstantiality, and the natural and graphic delineations of the workings of the human heart, are all so many proofs of the credibility and veracity of the writer, — we proceed to offer some remarks on this miracle.

[i.] In the FIRST place, then, the man on whom it was performed had not become blind by any accident that admits of relief. *He was certainly born blind.* All who knew him were witnesses of it; and he had become very generally known by sitting and begging on the public road. His parents, as we shall afterwards have occasion to take notice, affirmed the same to the Pharisees, though they dreaded their displeasure, and did not care to defend a miracle, the fame of which men in power were desirous, if possible, to suppress.

[ii.] SECONDLY, the man did not ask to be restored to his sight as some others did, who had accidentally become blind. Thus, there was no room for suspicion on his part. And Jesus Christ, after having sent him to the pool of Siloam, did not wait for his return to receive the glory of such a miracle; so that the blind man, on receiving sight, did not know who the person was that had cured him, or whither he had gone. There was therefore no possibility of collusion in the transaction.

[iii.] THIRDLY, the very question proposed by the disciples, which occasioned the miracle, is a proof that the man's blindness was from his birth; but the answer, as we have already intimated, was so little conformable to their notions, or to those of the Jews, their contemporaries, that it is impossible that it could ever have entered their minds, if they had not heard it from his lips. Jesus, in his reply, did not attribute the natural defect of the blind man to a particular providence, but added, that it was for the glory of his Father, who sent him, and also to manifest his works, that this man was born blind, in order to be cured. Who ever spoke thus? For, let it be observed, that Christ did not speak thus *after* the success, but exposed himself to be contradicted (according to the opinion of men) by him, who, he says, had sent him, when he declared the future proof of his mission.

[iv.] In the FOURTH place, consider the mode employed for giving the man sight; he laboured under an incurable blindness. The opacity of the crystalline humour, which is called a *cataract*, and the imperfect or periodical *gutta serena*, which does not wholly deprive of sight, or only at certain times, are maladies of the eye that in some cases admit of a cure, which depends upon a variety of precautions, preparations, and remedies, that (if successful) take effect only with time, and in most cases very imperfectly. But no precautions or preparations whatever were employed in the cure of the man born blind. Though a cataract may be reduced, or an accidental or periodical gutta serena may be cured, a *total* blindness, when inveterate and from the birth, is *incurable*. Such has been the prevalent opinion in every age. Aristotle[1] (whom we quote only as a witness to the sentiments of his own time) declares that it is *impossible for one born blind to receive sight.* The Jews admitted this truth as a principle generally known. *Since the world began,* they said, *it was never heard that any man opened the eyes of one who was born blind.* (John ix. 32.) Medical men in modern times (it is well known) are of the same opinion; and infidelity never could produce an example of blindness, *absolute and continued from the birth,* that was cured by the assistance of art. Such being the circumstances of this man's case, was it natural to imagine that clay put on his eyes should restore him to sight? Could any one have framed such an expedient, so improbable, so contrary to the effect desired, so proper for *destroying* the sight, if the power and wisdom of Jesus Christ had not employed it, and imparted the requisite virtue to it?[2] Moreover, is it likely that a person who had been born blind, and had continued so from his birth to manhood, should so easily credit what Jesus said to him; that he should obey him so punctually; that he should expose himself to public ridicule, by carrying the clay on his eyes, and causing himself to be con-

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[1] Cited by Casaubon on John ix. 1. (Critic. Sacr. tom. vii. part iii. p. 187.) Other passages from ancient classic authors are adduced by Wetstein, on John ix. 1. Nov. Test. vol. i. p. 902.

[2] For the reason why Jesus Christ employed the means he did, to give this man sight, see p. 219. *suprà.*

ducted to the pool of Siloam, with the hopes of being restored to his sight? Is not such a docility truly astonishing? And how could any such thing be imagined on his part before it happened?

[v.] *LASTLY*, the miracle was performed in the public street, and in the presence of many persons, and was immediately subjected to the strictest scrutiny that can well be conceived. If we had heard of such a miracle, we should not have given credit to so surprising a relation, till we had inquired who the man was on whom it was said to have been wrought? Whether, in fact, he had been born blind? Whether he actually was blind at the time when Jesus met him? And whether it afterwards appeared that he really was cured? All these inquiries we should certainly have made ourselves, or have been well informed that they had been made by credible people, before we would have believed the miracle. And if *we* would have made these inquiries, can it reasonably be supposed that they were not made by those who lived *at that time*? or that they would have admitted that wonderful fact on easier evidence than we would have done? Now we know that these very inquiries *were* made by the Scribes and Pharisees, and terminated in full proof. They sent for his parents, who declared that their son was born blind. He was himself interrogated, threatened with excommunication, and ultimately cast out of the synagogue; and, after examining the affair to the bottom, the truth of the miracle was established beyond the possibility of contradiction. On the one side there appears nothing but passion and calumny; on the other, nothing but what is simple, sincere, coherent, and infinitely surpassing the low jealousy and malice of the Pharisees, whose utmost efforts only rendered the truth more evident, and added that testimony which they would have gladly wrested from it, if it had been possible.

The reasoning of the man who was cured is unanswerable — *We know that God heareth not sinners — since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.* (John ix. 31—33.)[1]

5. Equally remarkable with the preceding miracle is *that wrought at Jerusalem by the apostle Peter in company with John, on* A MAN WHO HAD BEEN LAME FROM HIS BIRTH; and which was subjected to a similar rigorous scrutiny.

The account is given in the third chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, with every mark of veracity and genuineness. All the circumstances are so connected together, and so inseparable,—the place, the time, and the persons, all correspond together with such exactness, that we cannot admit a part without being forced to acknowledge the whole. In this miracle, the reader will take notice, —

[i.] *FIRST*, of the PUBLICITY *of the lame man's person and condition.* He had been lame from his birth, and was then forty years old. He was, moreover, well known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, having been carried daily to that gate of the temple which was most frequented to receive alms. The time of the day when the miracle was performed was that of public prayer, when the evening sacrifice was offered, when there was the greatest number of persons present, who were assembled from different parts of the city.

[ii.] *SECONDLY*, of the MANNER *in which the miracle was wrought.* It was *instantaneous*, and was so perfect, that the lame man could not only walk, but stood and leaped for joy, while he praised God, and testified his gratitude to Peter and John.

[iii.] *THIRDLY*, of the SEVERE EXAMINATION *which the transaction underwent.* Both the man who had been healed, and the apostles, are dragged before the tribunal of the ecclesiastical rulers. They are most closely interrogated respecting the fact. They assert the reality of the miracle; they declare that it was in the name of Jesus of Nazareth that the man was made whole — of that Jesus whom those rulers had crucified. What discoveries do the chief priests make? The apostles are in their hands. The man who had been lame is himself standing by. They are vested with full power, as magistrates, to take cognisance of the matter. If there be deceit, it must be detected. But no discovery is made; and immediately afterwards five thousand Jews are converted, and embrace the Gospel in consequence

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[1] Claparede's Considerations on the Miracles of the Gospel, part ii. ch. 4. See also Dr. Brown's Defence of Revelation, pp. 242—246

of what they had seen performed, and in a case where it was morally impossible that they should have been deceived.

Besides the miracles related in the cure of diseases, there are three remarkable examples recorded by the evangelists, in which Jesus Christ raised the dead to life; viz. the daughter of Jairus, a ruler of the Jewish synagogue, the son of a widow at Nain, and Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary. How many examples of the same kind occurred during his personal ministry is not related; though, from his message to John (Matt. xi. 5.), it is probable that there were other instances. But these which the evangelists have recorded were certainly not the least striking or important.

6. *The* RAISING OF THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS TO LIFE *is recorded by three of the evangelists* (Matt. ix. 18—26.; Mark v. 22—43.; Luke viii. 41—56.), *and the circumstances related by them are in almost every point exactly the same.*

Jairus applies to Christ, in the midst of a great multitude of people. Prostrating himself at his feet, Jairus besought him to come to his house and heal his daughter, who was at the last extremity. Jesus listened to his request, and on his way was followed by the multitude. A miracle of a different kind was performed at that moment (for all the three evangelists have connected it with his progress to the house of Jairus), by the instantaneous cure of an inveterate disease, in a person who only secretly touched the hem of his garment; a circumstance which rendered the miracle so much the more a subject of observation to the multitude when the person who was healed was publicly questioned on what she had done.

At the same instant Jairus was informed by his servants that his daughter was dead, in order to prevent him from farther importuning our Lord, whose visit to his house they then considered as completely unnecessary and useless.[1] Our Lord, aware of this message, encouraged Jairus notwithstanding to rely on him, and went steadily on towards his house, with the multitude attending him. All the customary and noisy lamentations for the dead were already begun; and our Lord found it necessary, for the quiet of the family, to remove the mourners, who went forth fully prepared to attest to the people without the certainty of the death, after having heard with scorn what they considered as a doubt on the subject, and what our Lord intended as an intimation of the maid's immediate restoration to life. Putting them forth among the multitude, he retained with him the father and mother of the dead young woman, and three of his disciples; a sufficient number to witness and relate the circumstances of her restoration. In their presence "her spirit came again," at our Lord's command. The effect was instantly produced by his almighty word; and was verified to the conviction of every individual, who saw her immediately receiving food, as a person in the full possession of life and health. The event was understood by the whole multitude; and the evangelist Matthew relates, "that the fame thereof went abroad throughout all the land." (Matt. ix. 26.) The person in whose family this miracle was done was sufficiently distinguished, as a ruler of the synagogue, to render such a remarkable event a subject of general attention; and though all the circumstances in the narrative have the aspect of the most natural and unexepected occurrences, which could neither have been combined by human contrivance nor anticipated by human foresight, no circumstance was wanting, either to ascertain the reality of the miracle, or, without any apparent ostentation or design, to give it the most unquestionable publicity.[2]

7. *To the circumstances of the* RAISING OF THE WIDOW'S SON FROM THE DEAD, AT NAIN (Luke vii. 11—15.), *we have already had occasion to refer, as illustrating*

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[1] Matthew's narrative might have led us to have supposed her to have been dead when Jairus first addressed our Lord, if it were not obvious that, omitting several circumstances, which are mentioned by the other evangelists, he begins his relation at the time when the father knew that she was dead, and places the circumstances in his narrative after that time.

[2] Sir H. M. Wellwood's Discourses on the Jewish and Christian Revelations, pp. 416—418.

the benevolence of Jesus Christ.[1] In addition to the observations alluded to, we may notice the circumstances under which this miracle was performed.

Christ was coming from Capernaum, where he had healed the servant of the centurion. On approaching the gate of the city, he met the funeral procession. The fact of the young man's death, therefore, was indisputable. "The widowed mother of an only son would not be precipitate in performing these melancholy rites: the proofs of death must have been sadly satisfactory, before she proceeded to pay this last debt of parental tenderness." The tomb was prepared, and a considerable number of her townsmen were accompanying the widowed mother thither, besides a multitude of persons who were following Jesus on his way from Capernaum. It was impossible that any miracle could have been performed under circumstances of greater publicity, or more instantaneously, or where the facts related were more easy to be detected, if there had been any suspicion of fraud or deceit; especially when we know that the rumour of this miracle was *immediately* spread through all the adjacent country. Jesus *came and touched the bier*, on which the corpse was laid according to the custom of that age and country, with a mantle thrown over it; *and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise! And he that was dead sat up and began to speak; and he delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on all; and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet has risen up among us, and God hath visited his people. This rumour of him went forth throughout all Judæa, and throughout the region round about.* (Luke vii. 14—17.)

8. *The* Resurrection of Lazarus *is related* (John xi.) *more minutely than either of the two preceding miracles, and from the particularity of the circumstances related, it acquires additional interest and publicity.*

[i.] While Jesus was beyond Jordan, in Peræa (whither he had gone, a persecution being raised by the Jews), the sisters of Lazarus sent an express to him, with this message,—*Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick.* After hearing this intelligence, he remained two days longer in the same place, and then said to his disciples, *Let us return into Judæa; Lazarus is dead. Then when Jesus came into Bethany, he found that Lazarus had been in the grave four days already.* (John xi. 6, 7. 17.) It is to be observed that while he was in Peræa he said to his apostles, *Lazarus is dead:* so that Jesus neither did nor could learn how long Lazarus had been in the grave from the testimony of one of his sisters. The delay also of the journey from Galilee to Bethany, must not be overlooked. By that delay the miracle became more bright, and its truth and reality more determined.

[ii.] The *scene* of it furnishes another circumstance extremely favourable for promoting the same end. It was not laid in Jerusalem, where the minds of men might be supposed to be held in awe, or biassed by power, where the miracle might be charged with ostentation, and where personal prejudices were triumphant. Nor was it laid in a desert, where there might be suspicion of deceit, but at the distance of only two short miles from Jerusalem.

The *precise time* of Christ's arrival at Bethany is a circumstance that must be viewed in the same light. His coming so late destroys all suspicions of any secret concert. It gave his enemies an opportunity of observing the whole transaction; as the season was, of all others, the fittest for finding access to their minds. By this time, the sisters of Lazarus were receiving the consolatory visits of their neighbours and friends:—*Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.* Jesus himself approaches, and mingles with the company as a mourner and friend. When Jesus, therefore, saw the Jews also weeping, who had followed Mary out of the house, *he groaned in spirit and was troubled.* He was under no necessity of affecting the appearance of sorrow, for he felt it—*Jesus wept;* and the reality both of his sympathy and sorrow did not fail to make him an object of regard. *Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him.* Every thing concurred to excite expectation and scrutiny from the malice of some of the Jews who were present, which caused them to insinuate a defect in the power or goodness of Jesus.—*Some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?*

[iii.] At length they arrive at the grave. *It was a cave; and a stone lay upon it,* which Jesus commanded to be removed, for he exerted his miraculous power only in cases where second causes were inadequate. This stone might be removed by

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[1] See p. 224. *suprà.*

the hand of man: therefore Jesus ordered it to be removed. This circumstance would excite the greater attention, as the objection felt by Martha to the execution of this command (ver. 39.) most evidently shows that death had *indubitably* taken place; and from the time he had been buried, especially under the influence of so warm a climate, it is certain that those changes of mortality must have passed upon the frame to which she alluded. No human means, however, could raise Lazarus: Jesus, therefore, interposed his miraculous power; and after a short prayer, which was expressly intended for the spectators, *he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth! And he that was dead came forth,* bound *hand and foot with grave clothes.*[1] That all present might have the fullest conviction of the reality of the miracle which had thus been wrought, Jesus commanded them to *loose him and let him go.*

[iv.] The *witnesses* of this miracle are likewise to be considered. Though some of those who had come to mourn with the sisters of Lazarus were the friends of Christ and his apostles, the evangelical narrative informs us that others were *not* friendly to Christ and his Gospel. Many of these, however, having witnessed the transaction, believed on him; but others, who were not willing to be his disciples, though they found it impossible to reject or to deny the miracle which had been wrought, went their way to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. The Pharisees themselves could not contradict the miracle, though they were interested in denying it. A council of the chief priests and Pharisees was convened. They did venture to examine the miracle, as they had done in the case of the man who had been born blind. The consideration of Lazarus and of his sisters, who were not mean persons,—the number of the witnesses, who were also persons of distinction, and who had filled Jerusalem with the news at their return,—and the fear of adding a further degree of evidence to a miracle which they were desirous of suppressing,—all these circumstances augmented their indignation against Jesus, and determined them to put him to death, and thus terminate his miracles. They said, *What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.*

If any additional evidence were wanting to confirm this miracle, it might be added that, after the resurrection of Lazarus, and six days before the passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where he supped with Lazarus, and his sisters; and *much people of the Jews knew that he was at Bethany, and they came from Jerusalem thither, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also whom he had raised from the dead. But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus to death; because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away and believed on Jesus.* (John xii. 1, 2. 9—11.) The curiosity of those who came to Bethany, and their belief in Christ, are natural consequences of the truth of Lazarus's resurrection, which could not but enrage the priests and Pharisees, who were the enemies of Christ; and their determination to put Lazarus to death shows the desperation to which the publicity of the miracle drove them. The resurrection of Lazarus was also one reason why, on the following day, *much people that were come to the feast* (of the passover) *when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. The people, therefore, that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead,* BARE RECORD. FOR

[1] The question has been asked, How could a man come out of a grave who was bound hand and foot? To this inquiry of the unbeliever a satisfactory answer may be returned. We learn from Josephus, and also from such travellers as have visited Palestine, that the Jewish sepulchres were generally *caves* or *rooms* hewn out of rocks. The Jews, therefore, as they did not make use of coffins in burying their dead, generally placed their bodies in niches, cut into the sides of these caves or rooms. This form of the Jewish sepulchres affords an easy solution of the supposed difficulty. The evangelist does not mean to say that Lazarus walked out of the sepulchre; but that lying on his back in a niche, he raised himself into a sitting posture, and then, putting his legs over the edge of his niche or cell, slid down and stood upright on the floor. All this he might do, notwithstanding his arms were swathed with rollers, after the custom of his countrymen. Accordingly, when he thus came forth, Jesus commanded them to loose him and let him go,—which circumstance plainly indicates that the evangelist knew that Lazarus could not walk till he was unbound. Macknight's Truth of the Gospel History, p. 175.

THIS CAUSE, *the people met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. The Pharisees, therefore, said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing,* by your threatenings or excommunications? *Behold, the world is gone after him,*— the whole mass of the people are becoming his disciples. (John xii. 12, 13. 17—19.) Is it possible to deny that Christ made his entry into Jerusalem in the manner related by the evangelists, while many persons were living who had actually witnessed it? Can we separate so notorious an event from the important circumstances which are blended with it in the evangelical narration? And can a more natural reason be assigned for such a concourse and triumph than the resurrection of Lazarus, of which many were witnesses, and which the whole multitude already believed to be a true miracle?

[v.] It has every character of a miracle: for it *was sensible and easy to be observed.* Lazarus had been *dead,* he was *alive;*—two facts which, taken separately, are of the most common sort, and concerning which many persons had the utmost certainty. *It was instantaneously and publicly performed before credible witnesses.* On Christ saying, *Lazarus, come forth!* Lazarus resumed life; and the testimony of the witnesses, especially of adversaries, is the most explicit that can be imagined or desired.—*It was independent of second causes.* The effect has no affinity in nature with the sign that accompanies it. What affinity in nature, what physical proportion is there, between the resurrection of Lazarus and the pronunciation of the words,—*Lazarus, come forth?* Lastly, *the end was important,* for it was to attest the divine mission of the Son of God.[1]

IX. But the most remarkable miracle of all is the RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ from the dead, which lies at the very foundation of Christianity. If this fails, the Christian religion cannot be maintained, or may be proved to be false. *If Christ be not risen,* argues Paul of Tarsus, *then is our preaching vain, your faith also in vain.* (1 Cor. xv. 14.) On the other hand, if this holds good, the divine mission and authority of the Founder of our holy religion are established. To this he himself appealed, as the great and ultimate proof, which was to convince mankind that he was what he professed himself to be,—the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. If we peruse the history of that event, we must conclude either that he arose, or that his disciples stole his body away. The more we consider the latter alternative, the more impossible it appears. Every time, indeed, that Jesus Christ attempted to perform a miracle, he risked his credit on its accomplishment; had he failed in *one* instance, that would have blasted his reputation for ever. The same remark is applicable to his predictions; had any one of them failed, that great character which he had to support would have received an indelible stain. Of all his predictions, there is not one on which he and his disciples laid greater stress than that of his resurrection. So frequently, indeed, had Christ publicly foretold that he would rise again on the third day, that those persons who caused him to be put to death were acquainted with this prediction; and, being in power, *used every possible means to prevent its accomplishment, or any imposition on the public in that affair.*

The importance of this FACT requires that we consider it with a little more minuteness than the other miracles of Jesus Christ. We shall therefore examine, in the first place, his own DECLARATIONS concerning his approaching death and resurrection; secondly, the EVIDENCE FOR THE FACT, *furnished by the testimony of adversaries*

[1] Claparede's Considerations upon the Miracles, part ii. ch. 5.

to the Christian Name and Faith; thirdly, the CHARACTER OF THE APOSTLES by whom its reality is attested; and, lastly, the MIRACLES subsequently wrought by these witnesses in the name of Christ after the Day of Pentecost, which attest the fact of His resurrection.

1. In the first place, let us examine the DECLARATIONS OF CHRIST HIMSELF CONCERNING HIS APPROACHING DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

[i.] All the evangelists unanimously relate, that Christ repeatedly announced the circumstances of his death and resurrection to his disciples. It is further worthy of remark, that those very prophetic declarations are frequently intermixed, either with such circumstances as do not, of themselves, enter easily into any man's mind, or with those which seem to have no sort of relation with one another; which proves that they cannot be the imaginary conceits of a fertile fancy, that delights in the invention of fables. It is altogether improbable that the evangelists should have invented Christ's discourse with Peter, concerning the sufferings that should *certainly* befall him at his going up to Jerusalem.

[ii.] Moreover, it is to be observed, that Peter had just before made that noble confession, in the presence of all the other disciples, — *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;* and that Christ had crowned this admirable confession with that extraordinary promise of his, — *Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* (Matt. xvi. 16—18.) Immediately after, Christ foretold what death he was to suffer from the chief priests and scribes, but added, that he should rise on the third day. On hearing which, Peter rebuked him, and said, *Be it far from thee, Lord! This shall not be unto thee.* But Jesus Christ, instead of approving this expression of his affectionate concern for him, severely reproved his indiscretion in these words: — *Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.* (Matt. xvi. 21—23.) This history seems to be very natural and sincere; and that mixture of circumstances, which, in all probability, have no manner of relation with one another, could not of itself easily enter into the mind of any man. Peter's confession was excellent; and the promise made to him by Christ was extraordinary; nay, the very expression of it implied something strange and difficult: but, above all, it appears at first sight, that Christ censured too severely the great zeal manifested by Peter for his person; and it does not seem very natural that he, who said unto him, *Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona,* and who promised to make him a pillar in his church, should almost immediately after say to him, — *Get thee behind me, Satan.* It is evident that it was the force of truth, and not the natural agreement of those circumstances, which obliged the evangelist to join them both together in one and the same recital. What necessarily occasions this remark is, the fact that Jesus Christ had *really* foretold his death and resurrection before he had suffered the former, and before the latter had taken effect.

[iii.] But what proves this fact more strongly than any thing else, is, that Jesus Christ, the very day before his passion, did such a thing as had never been done before, and which, doubtless, will never be done again, viz. He instituted a memorial of that death which he was just on the point of suffering. He foretold that he should suffer death from the chief priests, the scribes, and doctors of the law; which yet he might easily have avoided, if he would, by withdrawing into another place. But he rebuked the indiscreet zeal of Peter, who would have diverted him from that death: therefore he considered it as an event which was to be attended with the happiest and most beneficial consequences to mankind. And with what happy consequences could his death have been attended, unless it was to have been immediately followed by his resurrection?

Jesus, then, first instituted a memorial of his death, and then voluntarily suffered it. He commanded that it should be commemorated, whence it is evident that he regarded it as an event which was to be the means of our salvation. He foresaw that it would be commemorated: he foresaw, therefore, what would infallibly come to pass, and that, too, at a time when there was but little appearance of its ever happening. He did not say that they should commemorate his death only till he

rose again, but until his second coming. He foresaw, therefore, that he should speedily rise again, and that after his resurrection he should depart, in order to return again at the end of the world.

[iv.] Besides, no reasonable person can imagine, that the evangelists had wholly invented the account of the eucharist; for there is a wide difference between a *doctrine* and a *practice*. It is very difficult to forge a doctrine, because it must be concerted by the consent of several persons; but it is yet more difficult to impose a sensible practice, a thing in use, and as it were a speaking doctrine, upon mankind. It would certainly be the greatest instance of folly imaginable, for any one to suppose that a dozen poor fishermen, cast down, astonished, and confounded at the death of their Master, and undeceived in the opinion which they had entertained that he was to restore the kingdom of Israel; — persons who knew not what might be the consequence of their publishing the doctrine of that crucified man; — that they should invent the institution of the eucharist, with all its circumstances, and make Christ utter these words — *This is my body, which is given for you; This cup is the New Testament in my blood* (Luke xxii. 19, 20.); — words that implied something new and very surprising, and which the evangelists and Paul have unanimously recorded, though without any mutual compact, as appears by the trifling variation that occurs in their recital of them. It would, we repeat, be the greatest instance of folly imaginable, for any one to suppose that the disciples had the least idea of inventing these words, or the history of the eucharist. The inference to be deduced from it is this, that Christ foresaw his death, and suffered it voluntarily. Now, if he foresaw that he should die, and if he voluntarily offered himself to death, he then either foresaw that he should rise again, or he did not foresee it. If he did not foresee it, with what kind of hopes did he comfort his disciples? What was it that he promised them? Or what did he propose to himself by his death? Why did he not shun it as he might have done, when he was at supper with his disciples? What did he intend by instituting a memorial of his dead body, if that dead body were always to remain under the power of death? And if he thought that he should rise again, as we may very reasonably conclude he did, he himself could not have believed it, but only on the experience he had already made of that power which had restored sight to the blind, health to the sick, and life to the dead; for he could not think his own miracles false, and yet, at the same time, believe that he should rise from the dead. If he thought he should rise again, he also thought his miracles to be true; and if he believed his miracles to be true, his miracles must of necessity have really been true, because they were of a nature incapable of deceit and illusion, at least with respect to him who performed them. Jesus Christ could never imagine that he had fed five thousand men at one time, and three thousand at another, besides women and children; that he had raised to life the widow's son of Nain, the daughter of Jairus, and Lazarus of Bethany; and that he made Peter walk on the sea, &c. &c., if all these things had not really been true.

[v.] No one surely can doubt that Christ foretold his resurrection, who considers that it was *on this very account* that the chief priests and Pharisees appointed a watch to guard his sepulchre, and commanded the stone of it to be sealed. *Sir,* said they to Pilate, *we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead; so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate saith unto them, Ye have a watch; go your way, make it as sure as you can. So they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting the watch.* (Matt. xxvii. 63—66.) This, as we shall further have occasion to show, was such a matter of fact, as the disciples neither could nor durst invent in opposition to the public knowledge which every one had of it; and which, besides, agrees very well with the other circumstances of that event. For whence originated the report which was spread at Jerusalem, that the watch slept when the disciples took away the body of Jesus, if they had not really set a watch to guard his sepulchre? And what necessity was there to appoint a watch to guard it, had it not been to prevent the disciples from propagating the report that he was risen from the dead? And if Christ really believed that he should rise again, he could not have believed it but upon the truth of his miracles; neither could he have believed his miracles to be true, if they had been false. Thus it appears, that the connection of all those cir-

cumstances forms, as it were, a kind of moral demonstration, which cannot but convince any just and reasonable person.

2. Having thus considered the predictions of Jesus Christ himself concerning his death and resurrection, let us now proceed to investigate the EVIDENCE FOR THAT FACT.

The credibility of the Gospel historians respecting common facts (we have already seen) is generally acknowledged, even by its adversaries. Now their evidence, that Jesus really *died* upon the cross, near Jerusalem, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judæa, is peculiarly clear and direct. Numerous circumstances relative to his seizure, his public trial, his going to Calvary, and his crucifixion are minutely specified. Various particulars of time, place, persons, discourses, &c. are set down. The chief rulers in the Jewish nation, as well as the people, and the Roman governor himself, are mentioned as parties concerned. The publicity of his crucifixion in the suburbs of the chief city in the nation, its being in the day-time, at a solemn festival, (when multitudes assembled from several different countries, and from every part of Judæa,) are all noted. His hanging six hours upon the cross [1], his being pierced in the side by one of the soldiers with his spear, and blood and water evidently flowing from the wound [2], are incontestable proofs that death must have previously taken place. To these natural proofs of death, we may add the official testimony of the Roman centurion, who would have subjected himself to accusation if his account had been false, and who would be the more exact in it as the soldiers, "seeing that he was dead already [3], brake not his legs." Pilate, also, who was intimidated, by the dread of an accusation to the emperor, to consent to the crucifixion of Jesus, would likewise be afraid of having him taken from the cross till he was really dead. Accordingly, he did not permit Joseph of Arimathea to remove the corpse till he had the decisive evidence of the centurion.[4]

The chief priests and Pharisees, who had so long and so anxiously been plotting the destruction of Christ, would take care that he was really void of life before the body was taken down. His friends would never have wound it round so closely with linen cloth, as was the custom in Judæa [5], if there had been any remains of life. Even if they could be supposed to be mistaken; yet, lying in a cold sepulchre, unable to stir from before six o'clock on Friday afternoon, till the dawn of the first day of the week, the body must have been truly dead. The fact was well known, and universally acknowledged. The friends and companions of Jesus asserted it before his powerful enemies, in the most public manner, only fifty days after, and even they did not deny it.[6] Nay, the Jews by being offended at his crucifixion and death, gave their attestation to the facts. The very anxiety of the chief priests and Pharisees to prevent the removal of the body of Jesus, undesignedly drew from them a clear proof that they themselves were convinced of his actual decease. While his body was in the sepulchre, "*they said to Pilate, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said,* WHILE HE WAS YET ALIVE, *After three days I will rise again.*"[7] This implies their full persuasion that he was really *not* alive when they spake the words. Their asking for a guard to prevent the disciples from stealing the corpse, and from deceiving the people by pretending that he was *risen* from the *dead*, does also involve their being convinced that he was then *truly dead.*

Further, upon the same grounds that we believe ancient history in general, there can be no reason for doubting but that the body of Jesus was deposited, on the evening of the day on which it was taken from the cross, in a private sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea, hewn out of a rock [8], in which no corpse had ever been laid

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[1] Mark xv. 25. 34. 37.

[2] John xix. 34, 35. "The water in the pericardium, and the serum. It is said that there is much serum in the thorax of persons who die of torture." See Grotius, L'Enfant, and Archbishop Newcome on the text.

[3] Ver. 33.

[4] Mark xv. 43—45., which shows that he had then been some time dead. See the Greek, Le Clerc's Harmony, and Archbishop Newcome's note.

[5] John xix. 38—40., xi. 44., xx. 6, 7.

[6] Acts ii. 1. 14. &c.

[7] Matt. xxvii. 63—66.

[8] Matt. xxvii. 60. ; Mark xv. 46. ; Luke xxiii. 53. ; John xix. 41.

before.[1] Nor is there any ground for doubting, but that a great stone was rolled to the mouth of the sepulchre; that this stone was sealed by the chief priests and Pharisees, who would of course first see that the body was there, else this precaution would have been useless; and that at their request a guard of Roman soldiers[2], as large as they chose, was placed before the sepulchre, to prevent the corpse from being removed. Notwithstanding these precautions, however, early on the morning of the first day of the week following, the body was missing, and neither the soldiers who were upon guard, nor the chief priests, nor the Pharisees, could ever produce it. Yet none of the watch deserted their post while it was in the sepulchre, nor was any force used against the soldiers, or any arts of persuasion employed, to induce them to take it away, or to permit any other person to remove it.

The question then is, How came it to be removed? Matthew has recorded the account which both the friends and the enemies of Jesus, and the disinterested heathen military guard, give of this. Let us examine these, that we may see which best deserves our credit.

Early on the first day of the week some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done; namely, the earthquake, the angel rolling back the stone from the door of the sepulchre, &c. The chief priests applied to Pilate[3] the Roman governor for a watch to secure the sepulchre, lest his disciples should steal him away; and they sealed the stone (probably with the governor's seal) to prevent the soldiers from being corrupted, so as to permit the theft. By this guard of sixty Roman soldiers was the sepulchre watched; and, notwithstanding all the precautions thus carefully taken, the body was missing early on the morning of the first day of the following week. In this great fact both the Jewish council and the apostles perfectly agree: this cannot be questioned. The council would otherwise have certainly produced it, and thus detected the falsehood of the apostles' declaration, that Christ was risen from the dead, and prevented it from gaining credit among the Jews. On the resurrection of Christ, some of the soldiers went and related it to the chief priests, who bribed them largely, promising to secure their persons from danger, in case the governor should hear of their taking the money, and charged them to affirm that Christ's disciples stole his body away while they were sleeping. *So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying*, or report, Matthew adds, *is commonly reported among the Jews to this day.*[4] This flight of the soldiers, their declaration to the high priests and elders, the subsequent conduct of the latter, the detection and publication by the apostles of their collusion with the soldiers, and the silence of the Jews on that subject, who *never* attempted to refute or to contradict the declarations of the apostles, — are all strong evidences of the reality and truth of his resurrection. Had the report, that his disciples stole the body, been true, Matthew would not have dared to have published in Judæa, so soon after the event as he did[5], (when many persons who had been spectators of the crucifixion and death of Christ must have been alive, and who would unquestionably have contradicted him if he had asserted a false-

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[1] Matt. xxvii. 59, 60.; John xix. 41, 42.

[2] Matt. xxvii. 60—66.

[3] Matthew (xxvii. 62.) says that this application was made on *the next day that followed the day of the preparation*, that is, on the Saturday. Though this looks, at the first view, as if the sepulchre had remained one whole night without a guard, yet that was not the case. "The chief priests went to Pilate as soon as the sun was set on Friday, the day of the preparation and crucifixion; for then began the following day or Saturday, as the Jews always began to reckon their day from the preceding evening. They had a guard, therefore, as soon as they possibly could after the body was deposited in the sepulchre; and one cannot help admiring the goodness of Providence in so disposing events, that the extreme anxiety of these men, to prevent collusion, should be the means of adding SIXTY *unexceptionable witnesses* (the number of the Roman soldiers on guard) to the truth of the resurrection, and of establishing the reality of it beyond all power of contradiction." — Bp. Porteus's Lectures on Matthew, vol. ii. p. 306.

[4] Matt. xxviii. 4. 11—15. Justin Martyr (who flourished chiefly between A. D. 140 and 164 or 167), in his Dialogue with the Jew Trypho, also relates that the synagogue of Jerusalem sent out persons in every direction to propagate a report similar to that above related by Matthew.

[5] The Gospel of Matthew, it is generally agreed, was written A. D. 37 or 38, that is, only four or five years after the resurrection of Christ, at which time multitudes were living who would doubtless have refuted his statement if they *could*.

hood,) that the chief priests bribed the soldiers to propagate it; as this would have exposed himself to their indignation and to punishment, which they would the more willingly have inflicted, because he had been in the odious office of a Roman tax-gatherer, which he resigned to follow Jesus. The story of stealing the body appears from this account to have been so evidently false, that Matthew, though he faithfully records the report, does not say a syllable to refute it. He leaves the falsity of it to be manifested by well-known facts. Had the disciples really stolen the body, and invented the account of the resurrection of their Master, they never would have represented themselves as giving up all hopes of his rising again when he was dead, and as being backward to believe in his resurrection after they said it took place. (John xx. 9, 10.) Nor would they, in the same memoirs, have described the chief priests as manifesting their fears and apprehensions that it *possibly* might come to pass, by the extraordinary *guard* they provided to prevent any deception. If this theft had been perpetrated, the partners in the fraud would never have dwelt so much as they have done upon the women going more than once to the sepulchre, to look for the body. There would have been no time to have taken off the bandages, nor to have wrapped up the napkin, and to have laid it in a place by itself, separate from the other linen. (v. 6, 7.) These circumstances, therefore, would never have formed a part of the narrative. Nor would it have been recorded of Mary, that she said to Peter and John, *They have* TAKEN AWAY *the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.* (John xx. 2.) A few additional considerations will suffice to show the falsehood of the assertion made by the chief priests.

(1.) On the one hand, consider the *terror* of the timid disciples and the paucity of their number. They knew that a Roman guard was placed at the sepulchre. They themselves were few, friendless, and discouraged, in hourly expectation of being arrested and put to death as followers of Christ, and voluntarily confined themselves to a solitary chamber for fear of being either crucified or stoned. On the other hand, contrast the authority of Pilate and of the sanhedrin or council, the great danger attending such an enterprise as the stealing of Christ's body, and the moral impossibility of succeeding in such an attempt. For the *season* was that of the great annual festival, the passover, when the city of Jerusalem was full, — on such occasions containing more than a million of people, many of whom probably passed the whole night (as Jesus and his disciples had done) in the open air. It was the time of the *full moon;* the night, consequently, was very light. The *sepulchre*, too, was just without the walls of the city, and therefore was exposed to continual inspection. All these circumstances combine to render such a falsehood as that which was imposed upon the Jews utterly unworthy of credit. For, in the first place, how could a body of men who had just before fled from a similar guard, notwithstanding their Master was present with them, venture to attack a band of sixty armed soldiers, for the purpose of removing the body of Christ from the sepulchre? How, especially, could they make this attempt, when they had nothing to gain, and when they must become guilty of rebelling against the Roman government, — and, if they escaped death from the hands of the soldiers, were exposed to this evil in a much more terrible form?

(2) Is it probable that so many men as composed the guard would *all* fall asleep in the open air *at once*?

(3.) Since Pilate permitted the chief priests and Pharisees to make the sepulchre as sure as they could (Matt. xxvii. 65.), they would certainly make it completely so. Roman soldiers were used to watch. Death was the punishment for sleeping on guard. This watch was for only about three or four hours, and early in the morning, so that they might have slept before. Can it be supposed, then, that they were all asleep together? What could a few poor fishermen do against a well-disciplined and well-armed military force?

(4.) Could they be so soundly asleep as not to awake with all the noise which must necessarily be made by removing the great stone from the mouth of the sepulchre, and taking away the body?

(5.) Are the appearances of *composure* and *regularity* found in the empty tomb[1]

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[1] *Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the* LINEN CLOTHES LIE, *and the* NAPKIN, *that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but* WRAPPED TOGETHER IN A PLACE BY ITSELF John xx. 6, 7. This artless relation of the

at all suitable with the hurry and trepidation of thieves, when an armed guard, too, is at hand, stealing in a moonlight night?

(6.) Is it at all likely that the timid disciples could have sufficient time to do all this without being perceived by any person? How could soldiers, armed and on guard, suffer themselves to be overreached by a few timorous people?

(7.) Either the soldiers were awake or asleep: if they were awake, why should they suffer the body to be taken away? If asleep, how did they know, or how could they know, that the disciples of Christ had taken it away? Why did not the sanhedrin, for their own honour, and the respect they bare to the truth, put all those soldiers to the question? And if that thought did not at first suggest itself to them, is it not natural to think that they would have done it when, soon after, they found all Jerusalem inclined to believe in that crucified man; and that about six thousand persons had already believed in him in one day, and that only fifty days after his death? Doubtless the soldiers who watched the sepulchre were still at Jerusalem, and the sanhedrin retained the same power and authority which they had before. It highly concerned them to punish the negligence of those soldiers, or make them confess the secret of their perfidy, and who it was that suborned them, both to justify their own procedure, and also to prevent the total defection from Judaism of the great number of persons who had already joined the disciples of that pretended impostor. But this is not all. When, on the day of Pentecost, that is, fifty days after the death of Jesus Christ, the apostles showed themselves in the city of Jerusalem, and there testified that they had seen him risen from the dead, and that, after he had repeatedly appeared to them and ascended into heaven, he had poured out upon them the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit,—why did not the sanhedrin (who were so highly concerned to discover the persons who had taken away Christ's body) apprehend the apostles, and make them confess how all things had happened? Why did they not confront them with the watch? Why did they not imprison Joseph of Arimathea, and those men, till they had made them confess what was become of that body, as also every other circumstance of their imposture?

How unlikely is it that, if the disciples had come by night and had stolen away the body of Christ, they durst have showed themselves, and appeared in public, nay, immediately confessed that they were his disciples? It is much more credible that they would have hidden themselves after such an action; and that, if they preached at all, it would have been to people more remote, and not in Jerusalem, the very place where those events had happened, nor in the presence of that very sanhedrin, of whom they were so much afraid, and whom they had so much offended.

(8.) Once more, Why did not the sanhedrin have recourse to the methods ordinarily employed to discover criminals? They were very ready by menaces, torments, and persecutions, to oblige the apostles *not* to preach in the name of Jesus Christ; but they never accused them of having stolen the body of their Master while the watch slept. On that investigation they durst not enter, because they well knew what the soldiers had told them, and it was that very thing which made them so apprehensive. If there had been any suspicion that his disciples were in possession of the dead body, these rulers, for their own credit, would have imprisoned them, and used means to recover it, which would have quashed the report of his resurrection for ever.

In the fourth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we are informed that the sanhedrin caused the apostles to be brought before them for preaching, in the name of Christ, the doctrines of Christianity; and for affirming that Christ was risen from the dead. Had they believed that the apostles *stole away the body of Christ*, they would now certainly have charged them with this gross fraud, this direct rebellion against the Roman and Jewish governments; and unless they could have cleared themselves of the crime, would have punished them for it with, at least, due seve-

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evangelist amounts of itself to an ample confutation of the idle calumny above noticed, that the disciples came and stole the body of Christ. The historian does not dwell on the circumstance as if it were mentioned with a *direct* view of answering some objection,—as a forger would have done. He delivers it with all the simplicity of an unsuspecting relater of Truth; and it therefore carries with it far more weight of evidence than a multiplicity of reasons and the most laboured explanation. Wakefield's Internal Evidences of Christianity, p. 94.

rity. Such punishment would not only have been just; but it had now become necessary for the sanhedrin to inflict it, in order to save their own reputation. They had originated the story; and were now under the strongest inducements to support it. Yet they did not even mention the subject; but contented themselves with commanding them to preach no more in the name of Christ.

In the following chapter, we are told, that the whole body of the apostles was brought before them again, for continuing to preach, in opposition to this command On this occasion, also, they maintained a profound silence concerning the theft, which they had originally attributed to the apostles; but charged them with disobedience to their former injunctions. In this charge are contained the following remarkable words: *Did we not straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.* (Acts v. 28.) *To bring the blood of one person upon another* is a phrase of frequent occurrence in the Bible. In fifteen different[1] instances, in which we find it there, it has but a single meaning, viz. *to bring the guilt of contributing to the death of a person, or the guilt of murder, upon another person.* When it is said, *His blood shall be upon his own head,* it is clearly intended, that the guilt of his death shall be upon himself. When, therefore, the sanhedrin accuse the apostles of attempting to bring the blood of Christ upon *them,* they accuse them of an intention to bring upon them the guilt of shedding his blood: this being the only meaning of such phraseology in the Scriptures.

Should any doubt remain in the mind of any man, concerning this interpretation, it may be settled, beyond all question, by recurring to the following passage. In Matthew xxvii. 24, 25. we are told, that when *Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing* towards releasing Christ, *he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it:* and that then *all the people answered, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.* The meaning of the phraseology in this passage cannot be mistaken; and it is altogether probable that the declaration of the sanhedrin being made so soon after this imprecation to the apostles, so deeply interested in the subject, and on an occasion which so naturally called it up to view, the sanhedrin referred to it directly.

But if Christ was not raised from the dead, he was a false prophet, an impostor, and, of course, a blasphemer; because he asserted himself to be the Messiah, the Son of God. Such a blasphemer the law of God condemned to death. The sanhedrin were the very persons to whom the business of trying and condemning him was committed by that law, and whose duty it was to accomplish his death. If, therefore, his body was not raised from the dead, there was no guilt in shedding his blood, but the mere performance of a plain duty. His blood, that is, the guilt of shedding it, could not possibly rest on the sanhedrin; nor, to use their language, be brought upon them by the apostles, nor by any others. All this the sanhedrin perfectly knew; and, therefore, had they not believed him to have risen from the dead, they never could have used this phraseology.

It is further to be observed, that on both these occasions the apostles boldly declared to the sanhedrin, in the most explicit terms, that Christ was raised from the dead. Yet the sanhedrin not only did not charge them with the crime of having stolen his body, but did not contradict, nor even comment on, the declaration. This could not possibly have happened through inattention. Both the sanhedrin and the apostles completely knew that the resurrection of Christ was the point on which his cause, and their opposition to it, entirely turned. It was the great and serious controversy between the contending parties; and yet, though directly asserted to their faces by the apostles, the sanhedrin did not even utter a syllable on the subject. Had they believed their own story, they would either have punished the apostles with death as rebels against the Jewish and Roman governments, or else they would have confined them as lunatics.[2]

There can be no doubt, therefore, from the evidence of the fact furnished by the adversaries of the name and faith of Christ, that they were convinced he was actually risen from the dead; and yet it has been repeatedly urged by the opposers of

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[1] Lev. xx. 9. 11. 13. 16. 27.; Deut. xix. 10., xxii. 8.; 2 Sam. i. 16., xvi. 8.; 1 Kings ii. 37.; Jer. li. 35.; Ezek. xviii. 13., xxxiii. 5.; Matt. xxiii. 35.; Acts xviii. 6.

[2] Abbadie, Traité sur la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tom. ii. sect. iii. ch. 3. Dwight's System of Theology, vol. ii. pp. 537—539.

revelation as an OBJECTION to the credibility of Christ's resurrection, that he did not show himself to the chief priests and Jews.

ANSWER. — Various reasons, however, may be satisfactorily assigned why it was not proper that it should be so.

[i.] *In the first place*, when the cruel and inveterate malice which they had evinced towards Jesus is considered, as well as the force of their prejudices, it is not probable that they would have submitted to the evidence. They had attributed his miracles to the power of the devil; and his raising Lazarus from the dead, of which they had *full* information, only stimulated them to attempt to destroy him. Instead of being wrought upon by the testimony of the soldiers, they endeavoured to stifle it. Besides, if Jesus had shown himself to them after his passion, and they had pretended that it was a spectre or delusion, and had still continued to refuse to acknowledge him, it would have been urged as a strong presumption against the reality of his resurrection. But,

[ii.] *Secondly*, let it be supposed that Jesus had not only appeared to them after his resurrection, but that they themselves had acknowledged its truth and reality, and had owned him for their Messiah, and had brought the Jewish nation into the same belief; — can it be imagined that those who now make the above objection would be satisfied? It is most probable that the testimony of the priests and rulers, in such case, would have been represented as a proof that the whole was artifice and imposture, and that they were influenced by some political motive. Their testimony, moreover, — if truth had extorted it from them, and if they had possessed honesty and resolution sufficient to avow it, — would have been liable to suspicion. For it would have been the testimony of men whose minds must have been oppressed and terrified by a consciousness of their guilt; and it might have been said that they were haunted by ghosts and spectres, and that their imagination converted a phantom into the real person of him whom they had exposed to public derision, and sentenced to an ignominious death. Their testimony would have gained little credit with men of their own rank and station, and of principles and characters similar to their own. It would have died with themselves, and produced no effect beyond the circle of their own acquaintance, and the age in which they lived. And,

[iii.] *In the third place*, the character and religion of Christ might have been very materially injured by his appearance to the Jewish priests and rulers after his resurrection. They had no right to expect this kind of evidence. No good purpose could be answered by it: on the contrary, it might have been very detrimental in its effects. If they had remained unconvinced, which most probably might have been the case, the fact would have been questioned. The multitude would have become obstinate and irreclaimable in their incredulity; and they would have pleaded the authority of their superiors in station and office, as an apology for neglecting inquiry, and rejecting the means of conviction. If they had been convinced, without honesty and resolution to declare the truth, the fact would still have been considered as doubtful, or of no great importance. But if with their conviction they connected the public avowal of its truth, Jesus Christ would have incurred the charge of being an impostor, and his religion of being a fraud. Loud would have been the clamour of a combination. Suspicion would have attached itself to the evidence of men who had the care of his sepulchre, who appointed the guard, and sealed the stone that secured it, and who could easily have propagated a report which would have gained credit with the servile multitude. Christianity would have been represented, by persons who are prone to ascribe all religion to state policy, as a contrivance of the priests and magistrates of Judæa to answer some purpose of worldly emolument or ambition. Its progress and prevalence would have been attributed to the secular influence of its advocates; and it would have been deprived of that most distinguishing and satisfactory evidence which it now possesses, that it derived its origin from God, and owed its success to the signal interposition of divine power. But the inveterate opposition of the Jewish priests and rulers to the cause, and their violent persecution of the Christians, removed all suspicion of priestcraft and political design. If the disciples had agreed to impose upon the world in this affair, common sense would have directed them, first, to spread the report that Jesus Christ was risen from the grave, and then to employ an individual whom they could trust to personate him, and to appear before the multitude in such a manner and at such times as would not endanger a discovery;

as, however, Christ never appeared to the multitude after his resurrection, this removed all suspicion that the disciples had contrived a scheme for deceiving the people.

These considerations show that Christ's *appearance*, after he rose from the dead, *only to a competent number of witnesses*, who were intimately acquainted with him before his decease, is a circumstance highly calculated to establish the truth of his resurrection to posterity.

3. The CHARACTER OF THE APOSTLES also proves the truth of the resurrection of Christ; and there are ELEVEN considerations which give their evidence sufficient weight. Observe the *Condition* and the *Number* of these witnesses, their *Incredulity*, and slowness in believing the resurrection of Christ, — the moral *Impossibility* of their succeeding in imposing upon others, — the *Facts* which they themselves avow, — the *Agreement* of their Evidence, — the *Tribunals* before which they stood, — the *Time* when this evidence was given, — the *Place* where they bore their *Testimony* to the resurrection, and their *Motives* for doing so, — and the striking *Contrast* in the conduct of the apostles both before and after the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

(1.) *Consider the* CONDITION *of these witnesses.*

Had they been men of opulence and credit in the world, we might have thought that their reputation gave currency to the fable. If they had been learned and eloquent men, we might have imagined that the style in which they had told the tale had soothed the souls of the people into a belief of it. But the *reverse* of all this was the fact; for the apostles were the lowest of mankind, without reputation to impose upon the people, without authority to compel, and without riches to reward. They were also mean, despised, and unlearned men, and consequently very unequal to the task of imposing upon others. When all these circumstances are considered, it is impossible to conceive that persons of this character could succeed.

(2.) *Consider the* NUMBER *of these witnesses, and also of the actual appearances of Jesus Christ, which number was more than sufficient to establish any fact,*

By *seven* different credible authors viz. the apostles Matthew, John, Paul, Peter, and James, and the evangelists, Luke and Mark — not fewer than *eleven* distinct appearances of Christ have been related or mentioned, *after* his resurrection, and *previously* to his ascension, namely, —

1. To Mary Magdalen alone (Mark xvi. 9.), who saw Jesus standing. (John xx. 14.)
2. To the women who were returning from the sepulchre to announce his resurrection to the disciples. "Behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail! and they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him." (Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.)
3. To Simon Peter alone. (Luke xxiv. 34.)
4. To the two disciples who were going to Emmaus, with whom he conversed and brake bread, and then made himself known to them. (Luke xxiv. 13—31.)
5. To the apostles at Jerusalem, excepting Thomas, who was absent. (John xx. 19, 20.)
6. Eight days afterwards to the disciples, Thomas being present. (John xx. 26—29.)
7. At the sea of Tiberias, when seven of his disciples were fishing, with whom he *ate food*. (John xxi. 1—15.)
8. To the eleven apostles, on a mountain in Galilee, where Jesus had appointed to meet them. (Matt. xxviii. 16, 17.)
9. "After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once." (1 Cor. xv. 6.)

10. "After that he was seen of James." (1 Cor. xv. 7.)

11. And, lastly, by all the apostles (1 Cor, xv. 7.) on Mount Olivet, on the day of his ascension into heaven. (Luke xxiv. 51.; Acts. i. 9.)

On these various appearances, it is to be remarked, that Christ was seen at *different hours* of the day,—*early* in the *morning*, by Mary Magdalen and the other women,—*during the day* by Peter, by the seven disciples at the sea of Tiberias, by the apostles at his ascension, and by Stephen,—and *in the evening* by the ten apostles, and by Cleopas and his companion,—so that they could not possibly be mistaken as to the reality of his person. But we nowhere read that he appeared at midnight, when the senses and imagination might be imposed upon. Further, the several *distances* of *time* and *place* at which Jesus showed himself merit attention. His two first appearances were early in the morning on which he arose. One of them was just by the sepulchre, the other in the way from it to Jerusalem. The third on some part of the same day. The fourth in the evening of it on the road to Emmaus, and in a house in that village, which was between seven and eight miles from Jerusalem. The fifth, at Jerusalem, on a later hour of the same evening. The sixth, a week after, at the same city. The seventh, about sixty miles from it, by the sea of Tiberias. The time and place at which he was seen by James are not recorded. A ninth appearance was in some other part of Galilee. Forty days after his resurrection he again met the apostles at Jerusalem, and led them out to Bethany, that they might see him go up to the Father. A few years after this Stephen saw him (Acts vii. 55, 56. 59, 60.); and in about a year from that time he appeared to Paul, near Damascus (Acts ix. 3—9.; 1 Cor. xv. 8., ix. 1.), to whom he communicated his Gospel by immediate revelation. (Gal. i. 11—20.)[1]

The different kinds of conversation and intercourse which Jesus held with the different persons to whom he showed himself have great propriety, and increase the evidence of his resurrection. As the apostles were to be witnesses of Christ to the whole world, his appearances, conversations, and actions, after his resurrection, are well adapted to excite their attention, gradually to diminish, and at length to remove their surprise; and thus to fit their minds for attending with calmness and impartiality to the evidence of the fact, and to afford them the strongest and most undoubted proofs of it. The women, by seeing that the body was not in the sepulchre (John xx. 2.), and being told by the angel that he was alive (Luke xxiv. 4—10.), would, of course, be rather in expectation of seeing him, though with a mixture of fear. At his first appearance he permitted himself to be *seen* by Mary Magdalen; not to be touched. But he sent her to prepare the apostles for beholding him alive again (John xx. 11—18., Mark xvi. 9, 10.), by telling them that he should ascend to the Father. This report encouraged Peter and John to run to the sepulchre, where seeing only the linen cloths and the napkin, they returned, wondering at what had passed, perplexed how to account for it (Luke xxiv. 12., John xx. 6—10.); and therefore in a state of mind to attend to further evidence, and yet not to receive it unless it was valid. When Jesus showed himself to the other Mary, Joanna, Salome, &c. he addressed them with the usual salutation, let them take hold of his feet and pay him homage, bade them not be afraid, but go and tell his brethren to go into Galilee, and there they should see him. (Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.) This was further evidence to the apostles, and increased their hope of seeing Jesus themselves. His third appearance to Peter would probably convince him, and would be a strong additional proof to the other apostles. His walking to Emmaus with Cleopas and another disciple, and explaining to them all the prophecies concerning himself; going into the village, and sitting at meat with them; taking bread, blessing, breaking, and giving it to them; were such undoubted proofs of his recovery to life again, that the two disciples could not refrain from returning that very evening to Jerusalem to report what they had seen and heard to the apostles. (Luke xxiv. 13—35.) While they were speaking, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them; and after asking them why they doubted, bade them look attentively at his hands and feet, and handle him, that they might be thoroughly convinced he had flesh and bones, and that it was

[1] Newcome's Review of the Difficulties relating to Christ's Resurrection, and Benson's Life of Christ, ch. xii.

not a spirit which appeared to them. He then ate fish and honeycomb before them. Having thus clearly demonstrated to them that he was actually restored to life again, he showed them that he fulfilled the prophecies concerning himself as the Messiah; particularly those relating to his sufferings, death, and resurrection; and appointed them to be his witnesses to the world, and preachers of his Gospel to all nations. (Luke xxiv. 33. 36—49.; John xx. 19—25.)

Such undoubted proofs of his real resurrection kept their minds in the pleasing expectation of some further manifestations of his divine commission. All these interviews and conversations in one day afforded abundant matter for consideration. We are not informed, therefore, that he was seen any more till the eighth day after. During this interval, the apostles would have lesiure to revolve calmly the several distinct facts which clearly and decisively proved that he was truly risen from the dead. Thomas not being present at his interview with the other apostles, Jesus showed himself again to them all on the following first day of the week. He then submitted to a re-examination, and desired Thomas to put his finger into the prints of the nails, and to thrust his hand into his side, in the presence of them all. (John xx. 26—29.) After this, it does not appear that any of the *apostles* entertained the least doubt. Their obedience to Jesus, who commanded them to meet him in Galilee (Matt. xxviii. 16.), then to return to Jerusalem (Acts i. 4.), and to wait there for the promise of the Father (Acts ii. 4.), are decisive proofs of their firm faith in the reality of his resurrection; to which may be added the free and varied mutual conversation which Christ held with the seven disciples by the sea of Tiberias, after his appearance to all the eleven; his eating again with them; his particular queries and directions to Peter, and his predictions concerning him and John (John xxi. 1—23.), when he repeated some proofs, and added others, to confirm and establish their faith. That their fear and surprise at his appearance to them was now considerably diminished by the repetition of it, is evident from the strain of the conversation between Jesus and Peter, which is more easy than any that is recorded in the former appearances. James, also, having seen Christ alone (1 Cor. xv. 7.), would be an additional proof both to himself and to the rest of the disciples. As each would naturally communicate to his brethren what he had seen, heard, and felt, to convince him that Jesus was really alive again, the minds of the disciples in general would be prepared for further evidence. A still more public appearance than any former one, if appointed by Christ himself (Matt. xxviii. 16.) previous to his death (xxvi. 32.), and if it actually took place after that event, would afford this proof. Such an appearance would give to each an additional ground of conviction that he could not be deceived, if a far greater number than had ever before seen Jesus together were present at the time, and distinctly formed the same idea with himself. In Galilee, therefore, he thus appeared (1 Cor. xv. 6.); a region in which he had lived till his thirtieth year; where he had often preached, and been seen in public; where he wrought his first and the greater part of his other miracles; the native country of most of the apostles and disciples; where, from being best known before his death, he would be the more accurately distinguished to be the same person after it, and where any imposture would be soonest and most easily detected. Here was he actually seen alive by above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part were not dead when Paul, several years after, wrote his first epistle to the Christian church at Corinth. When the great apostle of the Gentiles published his defence of Christ's resurrection in that epistle, he declared to the world that Jesus had appeared to these *five hundred witnesses* at one time; and he appealed to a number of them who were then alive for the truth of his assertion. Now it is most certain, that Paul would not, could not, durst not, express himself in that manner, if there had not been a great number of disciples still living, who testified that they had seen Jesus Christ after his resurrection. Could all those men agree voluntarily to maintain a vile falsehood, not only altogether unprofitable, but also such as involved them in certain dishonour, poverty, persecution, and death? According to their own principles, either as Jews or Christians, if this testimony, to which they adhered to the last moment of their lives, had been false, they exposed themselves to eternal misery. Under such circumstances, these men could not have persevered in maintaining a false testimony, unless God had wrought a miracle in human nature to enable impostors to deceive the world.

(3.) *Consider their* INCREDULITY *and slowness in believing the resurrection of Christ.*

This rendered it impossible that they could themselves be deceived in that fact. In common with their countrymen, they expected a reigning and glorious Messiah, who was not only to deliver them from the Roman yoke, but who was also to subdue all his enemies. With him also they themselves expected to conquer and reign, together with the rest of the Jews, as princes and nobles in the splendid earthly court of this temporal Messiah. No expectation ever flattered the predominant passions of man so powerfully as this. It showed itself on every occasion, and adhered to them immovably until the day of Pentecost; for, just at the moment of Christ's ascension, ten days only before that festival, they asked him, *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?* (Acts i. 6.)

It is evident that they did not and could not believe that he would die: after he had predicted his death five or six different times, Mark relates that they *understood not that saying*. (ix. 32.) It is equally evident, that they did not believe he would live again, notwithstanding he had repeatedly foretold his resurrection. The notion which the Jews had of a resurrection was only that of the last day. (John xi. 24.) There was indeed a rumour raised by some, that John the Baptist had risen from the dead, and had afterwards wrought those miracles which were performed by Christ, under the name of Jesus of Nazareth, as Herod's guilty fears led him to believe: others said that one of the old prophets had risen again. (Luke ix. 7, 8. 19.) But both these reports the disciples knew to be false, and therefore had little reason, from such groundless mistakes, to entertain a belief, contrary to the general opinion of the Jews, of an *immediate* resurrection of any one from the dead. And whatever was said of any *other* resurrection, they considered as alluding only to that: *they questioned one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.* (Mark ix. 10.)

The apostles and other disciples, therefore, were so far from being credulous, or forward to believe the resurrection of Christ from the dead, that they were not only inquisitive, and careful not to be imposed upon, but they were exceedingly diffident and distrustful. The women who went to the sepulchre were so far from *expecting* to find him risen from the dead, that they carried with them a preparation of spices to embalm his body; and when they found it not, they were greatly perplexed, — not recollecting the words which Jesus had spoken to them concerning the resurrection, until the two angels who stood by them in shining garments had brought them to their remembrance. (Luke xxiv. 4—8.) But when they *returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest,* they disbelieved the testimony of the women, and regarded their words *as idle tales.*[1] When Christ appeared to the two disciples in their way to Emmaus, he found them sorrowfully conversing on all those things which had happened; and on his inquiring the reason of their sorrow, they gave him such an account as shows their desponding sentiments of their condition. Afterwards when these two were themselves convinced, and told the rest what had happened, *neither believed they them.* (Mark xvi. 13.) And when, immediately upon this, *Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit; and he said unto them, Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet.* (Luke xxiv. 36—40.) It is to be observed, that the *print of the nails* by which he was fastened to the cross was still perfectly visible both in his hands and feet: Christ therefore appealed to them, because they thus furnished evidence *that it was he himself*, which no man would counterfeit. Still *they believed not for joy, and wondered.* To remove this doubt, *he* further said to them, *Have ye here any meat? And*, in answer to this inquiry, *they gave him a piece of a broiled fish and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them.* (41—43.) At the end of this proceeding, and then only, did they entirely believe that he was risen from the dead. After all these proofs, Thomas, one of the twelve, not being with them when Jesus had appeared to them, expressed his disbelief of his resurrection,

[1] Luke xxiv. 9. 11. Other instances of unbelief in the disciples may be seen in verse 12. of the same chapter, also in Mark xvi. 11. and John xx. 15. 25.

when they told him that they *had seen the Lord;* and *said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side,* I WILL NOT BELIEVE. At the end of eight days, when the disciples were assembled together, and Thomas was with them, Jesus came to them; and, to convince the unbelieving apostle, and take away all pretences of incredulity for the future, he granted him the satisfaction he desired. This irrefragable evidence convinced Thomas, who immediately confessed him to be *his Lord and his God.* (John xx. 24—28.) The backwardness which the disciples manifested in believing the resurrection of their Master, and the scrupulous incredulity of Thomas in particular, are not only perfectly consistent with their temper and turn of mind, as set forth in other parts of their history (which shows them to have been neither enthusiasts nor fanatics), and on that account probable from *uniformity;* but they derive a further appearance of veracity to the historian, if we consider that a forger of the Gospels would have apprehended some detriment to his grand object, the resurrection of Jesus, from an indisposition and unwillingness in those who knew him best to acknowledge their Lord again. Such frankness and simplicity of narrative are striking presumptions (independently of the positive evidence already adduced) of the reality of this capital event, which is the corner-stone of Christianity; and indirectly prove the entire conviction of the apostles themselves that Christ had expired on the cross. All the circumstances of this part of the Gospel history cannot fail to make a very considerable impression on the mind of every impartial and discerning reader. There is a certain limit to which an impostor, aided by ingenuity and experience, may be allowed to proceed with little danger of detection; but an undeviating consistency with itself, and a strict conformity to the maxims of experience, through a *circumstantial* history of a great variety of extraordinary transactions, is beyond his ability, and only attainable by the honest votary of truth.[1]— Thus the incredulity of the apostles, in the first instance, and their reluctant, slow, and gradual assent to the belief of the fact of their Master's resurrection (which was such as is always yielded to evidence that contradicts prejudices strongly imbibed), concur to prove the absolute impossibility of their being themselves deceived in that fact. They beheld Jesus, not once only, nor in a transient manner, but for *forty* days together, and knew him to be alive by *many infallible proofs.* They had the testimony and assurance not of one sense only, but of all the senses. They saw him with their eyes, they heard him with their ears, with their hands they touched and felt him, and they tasted of the bread and fish which he gave them; he ate and drank with them, he conversed with them, he explained to them the Scriptures, and he wrought miracles before them himself. The fondest enthusiast could not be deceived in these particulars; but supposing that one man might be deceived, could all the apostles? Could *above five hundred* brethren at once be deceived? If in this case they could not be certain, there is no certainty of sense in any case. And as the apostles neither were nor could be deceived themselves, so they neither did nor could deceive others. For,

(4.) *Consider the* MORAL IMPOSSIBILITY *of their succeeding in palming an imposition upon the world.*

In support of this remark, we observe, in the first place, that the known integrity, impartiality, and fidelity, of the apostles, places them beyond every reasonable suspicion of intentional deception.[2] But, secondly, if they had testified falsely that they had seen Jesus Christ risen from the dead, it was either with a mutual agreement or without one. Now it could not be without a mutual agreement, for an error that is not supported by unanimous consent must necessarily fall of itself to the ground. And it would unavoidably have so happened, that, while one would have affirmed that Christ *was* risen from the dead, another would have asserted that he was *not* risen: one would have said that he appeared to *many,* and another that he appeared to *one* only: another that he appeared to *no* one: one would have related the matter in one way, another in another way; and, in fine, the most honest and sincere would have acknowledged that there was nothing at all in the affair. But, if they unanimously agreed to contrive this imposture, there must

[1] Wakefield's Internal Evidences of Christianity, remark xxx. p. 106.
[2] See pp. 122, 123. 128—137. *suprà,* in which this subject is fully discussed.

necessarily have been several persons who agreed together, constantly and unanimously, to relate a matter as fact which they knew to be utterly false; which is a thing altogether impossible: 1. Because it is inconceivable that a man should willingly expose himself to all sorts of punishment — even to death itself — on purpose to testify a matter as fact which he knew to be utterly false. — 2. Though, by an unheard-of prodigy, there should have been one single person so disposed, yet it is the height of extravagance to imagine, that there was a great number of persons who suddenly conceived and took that dangerous resolution; especially those whose previous conduct had been quite different, having not only evinced a great degree of caution, but also much timidity, — not to say cowardice, — on several other occasions. — 3. Although a very great number of persons should have agreed together to attest a falsehood, yet it is incredible that *they* should bear witness to it, who considered perfidy and lying as sins that were utterly inconsistent with their salvation: neither could it be supposed or expected of those who, if they allowed the resurrection of Jesus Christ to be a mere fiction, must also allow that they had followed a phantom, a chimerical, imaginary Messiah; and if they acknowledged that they had followed a phantom, they must likewise confess their own mutual extravagance. — 4. Such a mutual concert or agreement never could have been so carried on, but that some of them, to avoid punishment, would have discovered the intrigue to the Jews, with all its circumstances; it being most certain that, since Christ had been so very basely betrayed in his lifetime, it is more probable that he would be so served after his death. For they might have expected some reward from him when living, but they could hope for nothing from him after his death, but misery and torments, shame and continual remorse, for having followed an impostor. — 5. Lastly, there is no doubt but that the very same principles which had dissolved their mutual *fidelity* would more probably break off their mutual *treachery*. And since their love and affection for their Master, supported by the persuasion that he was the Messiah, could not sustain that mutual fidelity, which made them say, no very long time before, *Let us go also, that we may die with him* (John xi. 16.), so that they fled and left him wholly to the power of his enemies; — can it be reasonably supposed that, having been undeceived in the opinion they had entertained concerning the Messiah, they should yet (notwithstanding their shame, fear, and dejected condition), *presently after* unanimously agree to maintain and affirm a horrible lie, for the express purpose of disgracing their nation, by laying an imaginary crime to their charge, and persist in maintaining it, so that not one of them should recant or contradict himself, but all of them should unanimously suffer the severest torments, to affirm that they had seen what they had really never seen? It was, therefore, morally impossible that they should attempt, or succeed in the attempt, to palm an imposition on the world.

(5.) *Observe the* FACTS *which they themselves avow.*

Had they been metaphysical reasonings, depending on a chain of principles and consequences; — had they been periods of chronology depending on long and difficult calculations; — had they been distant events, which could only have been known by the relations of others; — in such cases their reasonings might have been suspected: but they are *facts* which are in question, *real* facts which the witnesses declared they had seen with their own eyes, at different places, and at several times. Had they seen Jesus Christ? Had they touched him? Had they sat at table with him, and eaten with him? Had they conversed with him? All these are questions of *fact:* it was impossible they could have been deceived in them.

(6.) *Consider, farther, the* AGREEMENT *of their evidence.*

They all unanimously deposed that Christ rose from the dead.

It is very extraordinary that a gang of five hundred impostors (we speak the language of infidels), — a company, in which there must necessarily be persons of different capacities and tempers, the witty and the dull, the timid and the bold; — it is very strange that such a *numerous* body as this should maintain an *unity* of evidence. This, however, is the case of the witnesses for the resurrection of Jesus. What Christian ever contradicted himself? What Christian ever impeached his accomplices? What Christian ever discovered this pretended imposture?

(7.) *Observe the* TRIBUNALS *before which they stood and gave evi-*

dence, and the innumerable multitude of people by whom their testimony was examined, by Jews and heathens, by philosophers and rabbis, and by an infinite number of persons who went annually to Jerusalem; for Providence so ordered those circumstances, that the testimony of the apostles might be unsuspected.

Providence continued Jerusalem *forty* years after the resurrection of Christ, that all the Jews in the then known world might examine the evidence concerning it, and obtain authentic proof of the truth of Christianity. The apostles, we repeat, maintained the resurrection of Jesus Christ before Jews and pagans, before philosophers and rabbis, before courtiers, before lawyers, before people who were expert in examining and cross-examining witnesses, in order to lead them into self-contradiction. Had the apostles borne their testimony in consequence of a preconcerted plot between themselves, is it not morally certain, that as they were examined before such different and capable men, some one would have discovered the pretended fraud?

(8.) *Take notice, also, of the* TIME *when this evidence was given.*

If the apostles had *first* published this resurrection several years after the time which they assigned for it, unbelief might have availed itself of the delay. But only three days after the crucifixion of Christ they declared that he was risen again, and they re-echoed their testimony in a singular manner at the feast of Pentecost, when Jerusalem expected the spread of the report, and endeavoured to prevent it; while the eyes of their enemies were yet sparkling with rage and madness, and while Calvary was yet dyed with the blood they had shed there. Do impostors take such measures? Would they not have waited till the fury of the Jews had been appeased; till the judges and public officers had been changed; and till people had been less attentive to their depositions?

(9.) *Consider the* PLACE *where the apostles bore their testimony to the resurrection.*

Had they published this event in distant countries beyond mountains and seas, it might have been supposed that distance of place, rendering it extremely difficult for their hearers to obtain exact information, had facilitated the establishment of the error. But the apostles preached in *Jerusalem, in the synagogues, in the prætorium:* they unfolded and displayed the banners of their Master's cross, and set up tokens of his victory, in the very spot on which the infamous instrument of his sufferings had been set up.

(10.) *Consider the* MOTIVES *which induced the apostles to publish the fact of Christ's resurrection.*

It was not to acquire fame, riches, glory, or profit: — by no means. On the contrary, they exposed themselves to sufferings and death, and proclaimed the truth from a conviction of its importance and certainty. "Every where they were hated, calumniated, despised, hunted from city to city, cast into prison, scourged, stoned, and crucified. And for what were all these excruciating sufferings endured? Gain, honour, and pleasure are the only gods to which impostors bow. But of these the apostles acquired, and plainly laboured to acquire neither. What, then, was the end for which they suffered? Let the infidel answer this question. As they gained nothing, and lost every thing, in the present world; so it is certain that they must expect to gain nothing, and suffer every thing, in the world to come. That the Old Testament was the word of God, they certainly believed without a single doubt. But in this book, *lying* is exhibited as a supreme object of the divine abhorrence, and the scriptural threatenings. From the invention and propagation of this falsehood, therefore, they could expect nothing hereafter but the severest effusions of the anger of God. For what, then, was all this loss, danger, and suffering incurred? For the privilege of telling an extravagant and incredible story to mankind, and of founding on it a series of exhortations to repentance, faith, and holiness; to the renunciation of sin, and the universal exercise of piety, justice, truth, and kindness; to the practice of all that conduct, which common sense has ever pronounced to be the duty, honour, and happiness of man; and the avoidance

of all that which it has ever declared to be his guilt, debasement, and misery? Such an end was never even wished, much less seriously proposed, by an impostor. At the same time, they lived as no impostors ever lived; and were able to say to their converts, with a full assurance of finding a cordial belief of the declaration, *Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably, we behaved ourselves among you that believe.* That this was their true character is certain from the concurrent testimony of all antiquity. Had they not nobly recorded their own faults, there is not the least reason to believe that a single stain would have ever rested upon their character. If, then, the apostles invented this story, they invented it without the remotest hope or prospect of making it [to be] believed; a thing which was never done by an impostor; propagated it without any interest, without any hope of gain, honour, power, or pleasure, the only objects by which impostors were ever allured; and with losses and sufferings which no impostor ever voluntarily underwent: proposed as their only end, or at least the only end which has ever been discovered to mankind, an object which no impostor ever pursued or even wished; and, during their whole progress through life, lived so as no impostor ever lived; and so as to be the most perfect contrast ever exhibited by men to the whole character of imposition."[1]

(11.) *If Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead, it is impossible to account for the striking* CONTRAST *between the pusillanimous conduct of the prejudiced apostles during their Master's life and the fearlessly courageous conduct of the same apostles after his resurrection.*

During the life of Christ, we see them limited in their conceptions; confounded by whatever was spiritual and sublime in their Master's doctrine; prepossessed by the idea which then prevailed among the Jewish people, that the Law of Moses and the Temple at Jerusalem were to subsist for ever; full of prejudices concerning the nature of Messiah's kingdom; disputing for the chief place in it, at the very time when Jesus Christ was discoursing to them concerning his death; and considering his public death as an obstacle to his reign, and an indelible opprobrium. If the apostles had always retained the character which they exhibit in the Gospels, it cannot be doubted but that Christianity would have been buried in the tomb of its Founder.

But let us prosecute our inquiries, and study the Acts of the Apostles, the narrative of which commences where the evangelical history terminates. viz. *after* the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. There we behold the apostles endued with the profoundest knowledge of the Gospel, emancipated from all their obstinate prejudices, notwithstanding these were founded on national self-love, on religious zeal, and on the dazzling prospects which they had conceived for themselves. They have for ever renounced all their gross ideas of earthly elevation; and it is evident that they fully understood that the kingdom, which they were commissioned to establish, was a spiritual kingdom, — that the Jewish nation were no longer the peculiarly favoured people of God, — that the Levitical worship was about to cease,— that the religion which they preached was to be common to *all* nations, — and that they considered their Master's death in its true point of view, as the best means of proving the truth of his divine mission, as the foundation of the covenant of grace, the most powerful motive to holiness, and his resurrection as the pledge of our resurrection

During the life of Christ, we see them in a state of uncertainty, incessantly asking for new proofs, exciting impatience by the nature of their questions, and deserving their Master's reproach of being persons of "little faith." Only fifty days *after* his death we see them decided, convinced, persuaded, speaking with that noble firmness which is inspired by a thorough conviction and knowledge of the truth, delivering the doctrine which they taught as certain and indubitable, as resting upon facts which all their senses had witnessed. No more fluctuation — no more doubt — no more uncertainty. WE KNOW is their expression. "*That which* WE *have seen with our eyes, which* WE *have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of Life, ... declare* WE *unto you*" (1 John i. 1. 3.); and they announce it with a tone of authority which well became the ambassadors of heaven, but which was ill suited to persons in their condition and of their education.

[1] Dwight's System of Theology, vol. ii. p. 529.

Before their Master's death we see them cowardly, trembling, timid in the extreme, feeble sheep who were scattered the moment their shepherd was smitten. *After* that event they became altogether new men; firm, courageous, and intrepid; they astonished Judæa, Greece, and Asia Minor, by their doctrine, and by their eloquence. They spoke before the people; they spoke before the tribunals of justice, and also to kings, with singular boldness and freedom. They confounded the wisdom of the Areopagus; they made a proconsul tremble on his throne; and they extorted from a king, before whom they were accused, a public acknowledgment of their innocence. That very apostle, who had been so intimidated by the voice of a female servant that he denied his Master, a few days after his death, when they were summoned before the very same magistrates who had caused him to be crucified, dared to reproach them to their face with having put to death "the Holy One and the Just, the Prince of Life." The menaces of their judges dismayed them not. "Whether it be right in the sight of God," they said, "to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye, for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Acts iv. 19, 20.) They braved the hatred, and they triumphed over all the power, of the Synagogue. Unappalled by torments, they rejoiced to be deemed worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus. Labours most abundant, perilous journeys, pains both in body and in mind, renunciation of all property, resignation to every evil, nay, even the sacrifice of their lives, — they accounted nothing hard or difficult. And (which is most astonishing of all) this courage was not a sudden burst of transient enthusiasm: it never relaxed for an instant, notwithstanding the numerous and diversified trials to which they were exposed; on the contrary, it was manifested for many years, and finally was crowned by a violent death.

If, from their public conduct as related in the Acts of the Apostles, we turn to the epistles or letters, written by these men after their Master's resurrection, we shall find their whole souls laid open. What noble and elevated sentiments do we read in them! What courage, yet what resignation! What holy joy amid the dangers which menaced them, and the evils that befell them! What profoundness in their doctrine! What sublime and affecting instructions! What tender solicitude for the rising churches! What ardent charity for all men, — yea even for their persecutors!

How was so sudden and so marvellous a change wrought in the apostles? Is it possible to conceive such striking differences in the same individuals? They were less than men, they became more than heroes. But the notion, that the Gospel is the invention of man, assigns no cause for this strange revolution; which, however, may be readily comprehended and accounted for, if Jesus be the Messiah, and if, according to his promise, he poured down upon them the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

In short, the conclusion resulting from the striking contrast in the conduct of the apostles, *before* and *after* their Master's death, is so convincing and persuasive, that, even if the apostles had not informed us that they had received extraordinary gifts, it is impossible to conceive how any other means can or could be imagined, which can account for that astonishing difference.[1]

4. Lastly, *the* MIRACLES *performed by these witnesses in the name of Jesus Christ* (one of which has already been noticed), *after the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and the success which attended their preaching throughout the world, are God's testimony to the fact of Christ's resurrection from the dead, as well as to their veracity in proclaiming it.*

No subject was ever more public, more investigated, or better known, than the transactions of the apostles. Luke, an historian of great character, who witnessed many of the things which he relates, published the Acts of the Apostles among the people who saw the transactions. It would have blasted his character to have published falsehoods which must instantly be detected: it would have ruined the character of the church to have received, as facts, notorious falsehoods. Now the Acts of the Apostles were written by Luke, received by the church, and no falsehood was ever detected in that book by Jew or Gentile. The primitive Christian

[1] Anspach, Cours d'Etudes de la Religion Chrétienne, part ii. tom. i. pp. 278—281.

writers attest its truth and authenticity, and heathen authors record some of the important facts which are related by the evangelical historian.

In the second chapter, we are informed that the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Christ took place on the day of Pentecost, at Jerusalem, where they were assembled after his ascension [1] in obedience to his command, waiting for that very performance of his promise (Acts i. 25.), both as a proof of his resurrection from the dead, and also to qualify them to spread the belief of it throughout the world. This was a public FACT [2], and it produced its proper effect; for, in consequence of it, not fewer than three thousand of those very persons, who but just before had joined in putting Christ to a painful and ignominious death, immediately submitted to be baptized in his name, and made an open profession of their faith in him, as the true Messiah that was to come. To the gift of tongues was added a number of undoubted miracles publicly wrought before Jews and heathens indiscriminately, in confirmation of the apostles' testimony concerning Jesus Christ. These miracles are related in the Acts of the Apostles, and were published among the people who witnessed them. They were not, like the miracles of Christ, confined to Judæa or to Galilee, but they were performed wherever the Gospel was spread, before Jews and heathens indiscriminately, and with the express design of confirming their mission from their Master. Their miracles, too, were subjected, like those of Christ, to the most rigorous investigation; and their adversaries and persecutors were compelled, as we have already seen [3], to admit them as facts, and to acknowledge among themselves that their publicity rendered it impossible to deny their reality. There was no want of inclination among the chief men of Judæa to deny the apostolical miracles; but the public notoriety of the facts rendered such a denial impossible. Though they did not hesitate to persecute the Christians, their persecution was vain. The people who heard the narratives and doctrines of the apostles, and who saw that both were confirmed by unquestionable miracles, neither did nor could resist their conviction. Upon these proofs and assurances, by the clear evidence and power of truth, "the word of God mightily grew and prevailed" against all that prejudice, malice, and every vice could do to oppose it, in Rome and at Jerusalem itself.[4] For, in that very city, where Jesus Christ had been crucified, and where it would have been impossible to make proselytes, if his resurrection had not been evidently *proved* BEYOND the POSSIBILITY *of a confutation*, great numbers were daily added to the church. A church was immediately founded at Jerusalem; and both the body of the people and their bishops (who were fifteen in number), to the final destruction of Jerusalem by Adrian, were Jews by nation. In other parts of the world, also, the church daily received new accessions of converts; so that, within thirty years after Christ's resurrection, one of those apostles appealed to it as a well-known fact, that the Gospel had been carried into all the countries of the then known world. (Col. i. 6.)

"Collect," says the eloquent Saurin, to whom we are indebted for some of the preceding observations; — "Collect all these proofs together; consider them in one point of view, and see how many extravagant suppositions must be advanced, if the resurrection of our Saviour be denied. It must be supposed that guards, who had been particularly cautioned by their officers, sat down to sleep; and that, nevertheless, they deserved credit when they said the body of Jesus Christ was stolen. It must be supposed that men, who had been imposed on in the most odious and cruel manner in the world, hazarded their dearest enjoyments for the glory of an impostor. It must be supposed that ignorant and illiterate men, who had neither reputation, fortune, nor eloquence, possessed the art of fascinating the eyes of all

[1] On the subject of the Ascension, see the Appendix, No. III. *infrà.*

[2] The circumstances of the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost are considered in the Appendix, No. IV. *infrà.*

[3] See pp. 168, 169. 174. 230. *suprà.*

[4] On the difficulties attendant on the first propagation of Christianity, see the Appendix, No. V. *infrà.*

the church. It must be supposed, either that five hundred persons were all deprived of their senses at a time, or that they were all deceived in the plainest matters of fact; or that this multitude of false witnesses had found out the secret of never contradicting themselves or one another, and of being always uniform in their testimony. It must be supposed that the most expert courts of judicature could not find out a shadow of contradiction in a palpable imposture. It must be supposed that the apostles, sensible men in other cases, chose precisely those places and those times which were most unfavourable to their views. It must be supposed that millions madly suffered imprisonments, tortures, and crucifixion, to spread an illusion. It must be supposed that ten thousand miracles were wrought in favour of falsehood, or all these facts must be denied. And then it must be supposed that the apostles were idiots, that the enemies of Christianity were idiots, and that all the primitive Christians were idiots."[1]

When all the preceding considerations are duly weighed, it is impossible not to admit the truth of Christ's resurrection, and that in this miracle are most clearly to be discerned the four first of the criteria already illustrated. And with regard to the two last criteria, we may observe, that Baptism and the Lord's Supper were instituted as perpetual memorials of the death of Jesus Christ; and that the observance of the weekly festival of the Lord's Day (or Sunday) commemorates his Resurrection. They were not instituted in after-ages, but *at the very time* when the circumstances to which they relate took place; and they have been observed without interruption through the whole Christian world, in all ages, from that time down to the present. Besides, Christ himself ordained apostles, and other ministers of his Gospel, to preach and administer Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and that *always*, "even unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 20.). Accordingly, they have continued to this day; so that the Christian ministry is, and always has been, as notorious in point of fact, as the tribe of Levi among the Jews. And as the æra and object of their appointment are part of the Gospel narrative, if that narrative had been a myth or fiction of some subsequent age, at the time of its fabrication no such order of men could have been found, which would have effectually falsified the whole story. The miraculous actions of Christ and his apostles being affirmed to be true no otherwise than as there were at that identical time (whenever the deist will suppose the Gospel history to be forged) not only ordinances of Christ's institution, but likewise a public ministry of his institution to dispense them; and it being impossible, upon this hypothesis, that there could be any such things before they were invented, it is as impossible they should be received and accredited when invented. Hence it follows, that it was as impossible

[1] Saurin's Sermons, translated by Mr. Robinson, vol. ii. serm. viii. p. 221. The reader who is desirous of investigating *all* the circumstances of our Saviour's resurrection will find them considered and illustrated in Mr. West's well-known treatise on the Resurrection, in Dr. Townson's Discourses, originally published in 1792, 8vo. and reprinted in the second volume of his works, and especially in Dr. Cook's "Illustration of the General Evidence of Christ's Resurrection." 8vo. 1808.

to have imposed these miraculous relations upon mankind in after-ages as it would have been to make persons believe they saw the miracles, or were parties concerned in the beneficial effects resulting from them, if they were not.

X. General Summary of the Argument furnished by Miracles.

Such is the diversified and authentic testimony for the miracles recorded in the Scriptures, especially those related in the New Testament; and as the various parts of which this proof of the inspiration of the Bible consists are necessarily placed at some distance from each other, we shall conclude this branch of the evidence by a brief recapitulation of the scattered arguments, together with a few additional suggestions. If, then, we have found, after a minute investigation, that the miraculous *facts* which are proposed for our belief, and upon the credit of which a particular system of doctrines and precepts depends, are such, 1. As do not imply a self-contradiction in them: — 2. If they appear to have been done publicly, in the view of a great multitude of people, and with the *professed* intention of establishing the divine authority of the person or persons who performed them: — 3. If they were many in number, instantaneously performed, and, independently of second causes, frequently repeated, and repeated for a series of years together: — 4. If they were of an interesting nature in themselves, of such a nature that the senses of mankind could clearly and fully judge of them, — likely to have made strong impressions on the minds of all who beheld and heard of them, and, for that reason probably, were much attended to, talked of, and investigated at the time when they were wrought: — 5. If public ceremonies were instituted in memory of the miraculous facts, and have been observed in all succeeding ages ever since they were so instituted: — 6. If the effects produced by them were not transient, but lasting; such as must have existed for many years, and were capable, all the while, of being disproved if they were not real: — 7. If they were committed to writing at, or very near, the time when they are said to have been done, and by persons of undoubted integrity, who tell us that they had been eye-witnesses of the events which they relate; by persons, who, having sufficient opportunity of knowing the whole truth of what they bear testimony to, could not possibly be deceived themselves; and who, having no conceivable motive nor temptation to falsify their evidence, cannot, with the least shadow of probability, be suspected of intending to deceive other people: — 8. If there be no proof, nor well-grounded suspicion of proof, that the testimony of those, who bear witness to these extraordinary facts, was ever contradicted even by such as professed themselves open enemies to their persons, characters, and views, though the facts were first published, upon the spot, where they are said to have been originally performed, and among persons, who were engaged by private interest, and furnished with full authority, inclination, and opportunity, to have manifested the falsity of them, and to have detected the imposture, had they been able: — 9. If, on the contrary, the existence of these facts be expressly allowed by the

persons who thought themselves most concerned to prevent the genuine consequences which might be deduced from them; and there were, originally, no other disputes about them, but *to what sufficient cause* they were to be imputed: — 10. If, again, the witnesses, from whom we have these facts, were many in number, all of them unanimous in the substance of their evidence, and all, as may be collected from their whole conduct, men of such unquestionable good sense as secured them against all delusion in themselves, and of such undoubted integrity and unimpeached veracity as placed them beyond all suspicion of any design to put an imposture upon others, —if they were men, who showed the sincerity of their own conviction by acting under the uniform influence of the extraordinary works which they bore witness to, in express contradiction to all their former prejudices and most favoured notions; in express contradiction to every flattering prospect of worldly honour, profit, and advantage, either for themselves or for their friends; and when they could not but be previously assured that ignominy, persecution, misery, and even death itself most probably would attend the constant and invariable perseverance in their testimony: — 11. If these witnesses, in order that their evidence might have the greater weight with a doubting world (each nation being already in possession of an established religion), were themselves enabled to perform such extraordinary works, as testified the clear and indisputable interposition of a divine power in favour of their veracity; and, after having undergone the severest afflictions, vexations, and torments, at length laid down their lives, in confirmation of the truth of the facts asserted by them: — 12. If the evidence for such miracles, instead of growing less and less by the lapse of ages, increases with increasing years: — 13. If those persons, who both testify and admit them, seem, on the one hand, to aim at nothing else but their own salvation and that of their brethren; and, on the other hand, if they are persuaded that their salvation is inconsistent with imposture and deceit: — 14. If great multitudes of the contemporaries of these witnesses, men of almost all nations, tempers, and professions, were persuaded by them, that these facts were really performed in the manner related, and gave the strongest testimony, which it was in their power to give, of the firmness of their belief of them, both by immediately breaking through all their ancient attachments and connections of friendships, interest, country, and even of religion, and by acting in express contradiction to them: — 15. If the revolutions introduced in the moral and religious world, since the period wherein these facts are said to have happened, have been just such as they would, probably, have been, upon a supposition of the truth of them, and cannot possibly be accounted for from any other adequate cause: — 16. If those who refuse to acknowledge all these miraculous matters of fact, must unvoidably fall into a great number of self-evident contradictions, as, for instance, to believe that the *wisest* among men are the most *foolish*, and the most *constant* the most *deceitful:* — 17. If all these matters of fact are so strictly united to one another, that it is impossible to admit the one without acknowledging the other also; and so inseparably interwoven with

some other indisputable matters of fact, that they cannot be called in question without renouncing our sense and reason: — 18. Lastly, if we have all the proof, which the exactest rules of the severest criticism can require, to evince that no alterations have been made in the original records and writings left us by these witnesses in any material article of their evidence, since their first publication, either through accident or design; but that they have been transmitted to us in all their genuine purity, as they were left by their authors. — In such a situation of things, where so great a variety of circumstances, where indeed all imaginable circumstances, mutually concur to confirm, strengthen, and support each other's evidence, and concentre, as it were, in attestation of the same interesting series of events, without a single argument on the other side, but the mere extraordinariness of the facts, — shall we not be justly accused of indulging in an unreasonable incredulity in denying our assent to them? And will not such incredulity be as dangerous as it is ridiculous? If facts attested in so clear, decisive, and unexceptionable a manner, and delivered down to posterity with so many conspiring signs and monuments of truth, are, nevertheless, not to be believed; it is impossible for the united wisdom of mankind to point out any evidence of historical events, which will justify a wise and cautious man for giving credit to them, — and, consequently, with regard to past ages, all will be clouds and thick darkness to us; all will be hesitation and scepticism; nor will anything be credible, which comes not confirmed to us by the report of our own senses and experience. In short, where there is the strongest assurance of the existence of any particular series of past facts, which we are capable of acquiring, according to the present frame of our nature, and the state of things in the world, to reject these facts after all, and to pretend to excuse ourselves from not believing them upon the bare suspicion of a possibility that they may be false, is a most absurd contradiction to the principles of common sense, and to the universal practice of mankind.[1]

XI. A Comparison of the Scripture Miracles with pretended Pagan and Popish Miracles.

Notwithstanding the mass of evidence above adduced, the opposers of revelation have endeavoured to weaken its force, or, rather, to set it aside altogether, by insinuating that there are particular accounts of miraculous facts, which are as well authenticated as those related in the Scriptures, and that the latter are to be rejected as false and incredible. But counterfeited miracles are no proof that there never were real miracles; and the more these pretended miracles are investigated, the more defective is the evidence adduced for them. For,

1. In the *first* place, the scene of most of them is laid in distant countries and remote ages; whereas the miracles, recorded in the Scriptures, were wrought in an age and period whose history is well known, and as fully ascertained as the history of the last century.

2. *Secondly*, the more ancient heathen miracles are acknowledged by the adver-

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[1] Abbadie, Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tome ii. pp. 147—149. Squire's Indifference for Religion inexcusable, sect. 48.

saries of Christianity, to have been performed in ages of gross ignorance, when the common people were very liable to be deceived. They were solitary exertions of power, rarely attempted, which could not be subjected to the test of a rigorous scrutiny, being in almost every instance wrought in secret recesses of the temples, generally in the night-time, and before only one or two persons who had come with the expectation of seeing a miracle, and so might easily be imposed upon; or who, being the accomplices of the priests in their frauds, were hired to announce that a miracle had taken place. Whereas the miracles related in the Scriptures were wrought before multitudes, who had every possible opportunity of investigating them, and most of whom were adversaries to the persons by whom the miracles were is wrought.

3. *Thirdly*, the heathen priests, being mostly persons of high rank, were regarded with the utmost veneration by the common people, who would eagerly and implicitly receive every account of miracles said to be wrought by them. In like manner, such miracles, as their sovereigns and legislators pretended to perform, were readily and implicitly received by the multitude; and even persons of better understanding, from fear or flattery, might affect to believe them. This circumstance completely discredits the two miracles, *said* to be performed by Vespasian at Alexandria, during his contest for the empire, and which are examined in a subsequent page. In short, it is certain that none of the heathen miracles underwent any proper examination; while those of Christ and his apostles, who had no lustre of birth or dignity to dazzle or procure the veneration of the multitude, were subjected to the strictest possible examination of their adversaries, who in no one instance could gainsay or deny them.

4. *Fourthly*, the heathen miracles were performed for the support of the established religion, and were all engrafted upon the superstitious notions and prejudices of the vulgar, who were, therefore, disposed to receive them; hence, they gained an easy reception amongst them. But the miracles recorded in the Bible were opposed to all the then established religions in the world; and those wrought by Christ and his apostles actually overthrew the religious establishments of all countries. So that, if they *forced* themselves on the belief of mankind, it was merely by the power of the irresistible evidence with which they were accompanied.

5. In the *fifth* place, the heathen miracles are vouched to us by no such testimony as can induce a prudent man to give them any credit. They are not reported by any eye-witnesses of them, nor by any persons on whom they were wrought. Those who relate them do not even pretend to have received them from eye-witnesses: we know them only by a number of vague reports, the original of which no one can exactly trace. Thus, the miracles ascribed to Pythagoras were not reported until several hundred years after his death, and those of Apollonius one hundred years after his death. If, indeed, any of the heathen miracles, whether ancient or modern, had any witnesses, none of them travelled from country to country, none of them published these miracles under persecution; none of them sealed their testimony concerning them with their blood. In all these respects, the evidence attending the Christian miracles has infinitely the advantage of the proofs by which the heathen wonders are supported. The miracles of Christ are vouched to posterity by the testimony of many eye-witnesses, who preached in every country *immediately after they* were wrought; who all concurred in the same reports; and who had no temptations from interest to forge such stories, but rather innumerable temptations to the contrary, because, by preaching the history of their Master, they every where exposed themselves to the severest persecution, and often to death itself. Further, these witnesses to the miracles of Jesus rendered their testimony credible, by performing similar miracles, so that when mankind saw what things they accomplished, they could entertain no doubt concerning the other. These miracles were also recorded by four historians, whose memoirs not only agree in the accounts they give of Christ's miracles, but are also confirmed by the reports given of them by numerous other eye-witnesses, in their discourses to the Gentiles, among whom they travelled and preached.

6. *Lastly*, the more ancient heathen miracles were nowhere credited by the intelligent and judicious; and the belief of them among the vulgar produced no effects by which the *certain persuasion* entertained by mankind concerning them could be demonstrated. They were wrought to confirm no doctrine, or else to establish idolatry, and consequently could not be done by divine power. On the con-

trary, the testimony of the apostles and eye-witnesses of the Christian miracles was embraced by thousands in every country, among whom were many persons distinguished by their birth, their learning, and their good sense; and all of whom forsook the religion in which they had been educated, and embraced the Christian profession; though such conduct exposed them to the severest persecutions and sufferings, and even to loss of life.

The preceding facts and reasoning equally destroy the credit of the *lying wonders* [1], which have been appealed to in behalf of Christianity itself. They were all performed in support of the faith established, and, what is worthy of notice, they happened for the *most part* in the night-time, at the sepulchres of the martyrs, or in deserts, or in the recesses of churches, and before *no* witnesses. Or, if a single witness or two were admitted, they were generally friends to the cause, on account of which the miracle was to be exhibited; and therefore they were in a disposition to be imposed upon by every cunning pretender. Further, as these miracles were performed in support of a religion already believed by the multitude to be divine, the reports of wonders, said to be wrought in its behalf, would have been eagerly credited without examination. Or, if any one, more judicious than the rest, entertained any doubts concerning them, he might refrain from publishing his scruples, out of respect to the cause in which he was engaged. On this account they suffered the reports of such things to pass uncontradicted; or, perhaps, out of a mistaken zeal, they joined the multitude in spreading reports of matters, from which so much credit redounded to the whole body.[2] Such is the evidence of the false

[1] 2 Thess. ii. 9. *Τερατα ψευδους*; which words, Grotius rightly observes, do not mean *false miracles*, but miracles which establish false doctrines.

[2] The antagonists of Christianity have triumphantly demanded, *at what time* miracles ceased to be performed? And, why are they not *now* wrought? These questions admit of easy and satisfactory answers. The miracles may be said to cease, with respect to our belief, when we can no longer obtain satisfactory evidence of their continuation. That miraculous powers were exercised after the death of the apostles, on certain occasions, is a fact supported by the unanimous and successive testimony of the fathers down to the reign of the emperor Julian. In the apostolical age miracles were frequent; in the succeeding century their number decreased, but still we have satisfactory evidence, in the appeals made to them, as matters of fact, by the Christian apologists, that they *were* actually performed. (See particularly Tertullian's Apologia, c. 22., and the Octavius of Minutius Felix, c. 27., and also the references in Mr. Kett's Bampton Lectures, p. iv. of the Notes and Authorities.) After the third century we have no authentic testimony for the working of miracles, with the exception of the miraculous frustration of the emperor Julian's mad attempt to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, which is so clearly attested by heathen adversaries as well as by ecclesiastical writers, that the sceptical historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (though he attempts to invalidate some of its proofs, and insinuates a want of impartial authorities), is *compelled* not only to acknowledge the general fact, but also many of the particular circumstances by which it was accompanied and distinguished. In reply to the question,—Why are not miracles *now* wrought?—we remark that, the design of miracles being to confirm and authorise the Christian religion, there is no longer any occasion for them, now that it is established in the world, and is daily extending its triumphs in heathen lands by the divine blessing on the preached Gospel. Besides, if they were continued, they would be of no use, because their force and influence would be lost by the frequency of them; for, miracles being a sensible suspension or controlment of—or deviation from—the established course or laws of nature, if they were repeated on every occasion all distinctions of natural and supernatural would vanish, and we should be at a loss to say, which were the ordinary and which the extraordinary works of Providence. Moreover, it is probable that, if they were continued, they would be of no use, because those persons who refuse to be convinced by the miracles recorded in the New Testament would not be convinced by any new ones: for it is not from want of evidence, but from want of sincerity, and out of passion and prejudice, that any man rejects the miracles related in the Scriptures; and the same want

miracles mentioned by some of the ancient Christians. They can lay claim to none of the proofs by which the miracles of Jesus and his apostles are established; and the miracles *said* to have taken place in modern times are, if possible, still more destitute of evidence.[1] Besides all the marks of evidence above mentioned, by which the ancient frauds are confuted, they have stains peculiar to themselves, by which their credibility is utterly destroyed.[2]

Let us now apply the preceding tests to the principal miracles ascribed to pagans and to the Romish church, which have been brought forward by the opposers of revelation, with the insidious but fruitless design of invalidating the credibility of the Gospel miracles. The chief pretenders to miracles among the ancient heathens were Aristeas, Pythagoras, Alexander of Pontus, Vespasian, and Apollonius Tyanæus: and if we examine the miracles ascribed to them, we shall find that they were either trifling or absurd, and were wrought not to promote the honour of God and the good of mankind; and that these miracles were neither designed to confirm any useful doctrine, nor to reform mankind from superstition and vice, but to gain reputation with the vulgar, and to strike men with astonishment.

[i.] Herodotus relates, that he *heard* a story told at Proconnesus, that Aristeas died there, but that his body could not be found for

of sincerity, the same passions and prejudices, would make him resist any proof, any miracle whatever. Lastly, a perpetual power of working of miracles would in all ages give occasion to continual impostures, while it would rescind and reverse all the settled laws and constitutions of Providence. Frequent miracles would be thought to proceed more from some defect in nature than from the particular interposition of the Deity; and men would become atheists by means of them, rather than Christians. The topics here briefly noticed are more fully discussed by Bp. Newton, Works, vol. vi. pp. 193—208., and by Dr. Jenkin in his Reasonableness of the Christian Religion, vol. ii. pp. 484—494.

[1] The most distinguished miracles, which are credited by the church of Rome, are those attributed to Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the order of Jesuits, and to Francis Xavier, one of his earliest associates, who was surnamed the Apostle of the Indies. Neither of these men, during their lives, claimed the power of working miracles. Xavier, indeed, in his correspondence with his friends during his mission, not only made no mention of miracles, but expressly disclaimed all supernatural assistance. Ribadeneira, a Jesuit and contemporary with Loyola, in the earliest account of his life, confessed that Loyola had not wrought any miracles, and anticipated the objections which might be urged from this circumstance against his claims to saintship; but fifteen years afterwards, when Loyola's canonisation was in agitation, he retracted this acknowledgment, and mentioned a variety of miracles which he *said* had been wrought by him. The insincerity and fraud of this statement are severely exposed by Bayle, in his Dictionary, art. *Loyola*, note (*N.*) The earliest life of Xavier was not published until about *forty* years *after* his death; and it is to be observed, that, of the numerous miracles which are ascribed to him, the scene of action is laid at a great distance from the country where they were first reported; being *supposed* to have been performed in China and Japan, but reported and believed only in Europe, where the persons to whom they were proposed (being unavoidably deprived of all opportunities of examining them and ascertaining the truth) were liable to be imposed upon by those whose private interests were connected with the propagation of an imposture. On the miracles ascribed to Loyola and Xavier, see Bp. Douglas's Criterion, pp. 64—78. In the Christian Observer for 1817 (vol. xvi. pp. 782—790.) there are some excellent strictures on a popish miracle, pretended to have been wrought on one Winifred White at St. Winifred's Well. In the British Critic for 1823 (vol. xix. N. S. pp. 43—57.) the reader will find some acute remarks on a pretended miracle, said to have been wrought on an English nun, near Chelmsford, in *Essex*, by Prince Alexander Hohenlohe residing at Bamberg, in *Germany*. And in Dr. Brown's Defence of Revealed Religion (pp. 205—212.), the reader will find an exposure and refutation of the miracles pretended to be wrought by the holy coat of Trèves, in 1844.

[2] Macknight's Truth of the Gospel History, pp. 361—373.

seven years; that, afterwards, he appeared and made verses, and then disappeared; and that three hundred and forty years after this he was seen at Metapontum, where he erected an altar to Apollo, and a statue for himself close by it, telling them that he had once been the crow which accompanied Apollo into Italy; after which he vanished again. The pretended resurrection of this man was compared by Celsus with that of Jesus Christ; but how absurd is it to compare a story, which has every mark of fiction, with the accounts of Christ's resurrection! For, in the first place, Herodotus, who *first* mentions it, did not write till *four hundred and ten* years after it; secondly, he gives it only on hearsay; and, lastly, it is an idle tale, to which no man of sense can give the least credit; it being impossible that any Metapontine, then living, *could* know a man who had been dead nearly *four centuries* before.[1]

[ii.] Occurrences equally extravagant as these are related of Pythagoras, as that he foretold to some fishermen the exact number of fish which they had caught, and having paid them for them, commanded the men to return them alive to the sea[2]; that he detained the savage Daunian bear, and having fed it with maize and acorns, compelled it by an oath no longer to touch any living thing; that by whispering in the ear of an ox which was eating green beans at Tarentum, he not only caused the beast to refrain from them, but that the latter never after tasted them[3]; and that he showed to the Scythian philosopher, Abaris, his golden thigh, telling him he had come down from heaven, and assumed a human form, for the purpose of remedying and benefiting the condition of mankind.[4] Similar extraordinary things are related of Pythagoras by his biographer Porphyry; who, as well as Iamblichus, affirms, that he communicated the power of working miracles to others. On these assertions we remark, 1. That Porphyry and Iamblichus (who compiled their lives of the philosopher *only something more than eight hundred years* AFTER his death) wrote at a time when the miracles of the Gospel were known throughout the Roman empire, and were every where appealed to as the proofs of the Christian religion; — 2. That those authors themselves wrote in the controversy between the Gentiles and Christians; — 3. That their principal design in publishing their memoirs of Pythagoras was to discredit the Christian miracles, by placing miracles, equal or greater, as they imagined, in opposition to them. It cannot, therefore, excite astonishment if, while they had this end in view, they made the competition as close as they could, and endeavoured to give the preference to their hero; — 4. Lastly, the power of working miracles, pretended to be imparted by Pythagoras, consisted only in the secrets of magic and incantation.

[iii.] In order to show how easy it is for cunning and impudence to impose on the credulity of barbarians, Mr. Hume introduces the story of Alexander of Pontus, an interpreter of Æsculapius and a

[1] Herodot. lib. iv. cc. 14, 15. vol. i. pp. 254, 255. edit. Oxon. Bp. Leng, at the Boyle Lectures, vol. iii. p. 138. folio edit.
[2] Iamblichus's Life of Pythagoras, translated by Mr. Taylor, chap. viii. p. 23.
[3] Ibid. chap. xiii. pp. 40, 41.
[4] Ibid. chap. xix. pp. 67, 68.

fortuneteller, and compares this juggler to the apostle Paul. Alexander, however, first practised his impositions, not among the philosophers of Athens, but among the rude and ignorant Paphlagonians; while Paul preached at Corinth, at Rome, and at Athens, before the Stoics and Epicureans, and even before the Areopagus, the most venerable judicature in Greece. Further, Alexander founded his impositions on the established superstitions; while the Apostle, by propagating a new religion, encountered the prejudices and incurred the hatred of the heathens. Alexander *enriched* himself, while the Apostle (it is well known) laboured with his hands for his own support. Lastly, Paul wrought his miracles, and *preached Christ crucified*, before the enemies of the Gospel, very many of whom were men of learning; while the Pontian juggler exhibited his wonders only before those who were thorough believers in the popular system; and his nocturnal mysteries were always introduced with an *avaunt* to atheists, Christians, and Epicureans; none of whom could have been present at them without exposing themselves to certain danger.[1]

[iv.] But the principal instance noticed by Mr. Hume and his copyists, and which he affirms to be the best attested in all profane history, is that of the miracle said to have been performed by the emperor Vespasian at Alexandria, in Egypt, in curing a blind man by means of his spittle, and a man who was lame in his hand by the touch of his foot. The transaction is thus related by Tacitus: — "One of the common people of Alexandria, known to be diseased in his eyes, by the admonition of the god Serapis, whom that superstitious nation worship above all other gods, prostrated himself before the emperor, earnestly imploring from him a remedy for his blindness, and intreating that he would deign to anoint with his spittle his checks and the balls of his eyes. Another, diseased in his hand, requested, by the admonition of the same god, that he might be touched by the foot of the emperor. Vespasian at first derided and despised their application; afterwards, when they continued to urge their petitions, he sometimes appeared to dread the imputation of vanity; and at other times, by the earnest supplication of the patients, and the persuasion of his flatterers, to be induced to hope for success. At length he commanded an inquiry to be made by the physicians, whether such a blindness and debility were vincible by human aid. The report of the physicians contained various points; that in the one, the power of vision was not destroyed, but would return, if the obstacles were removed; that in the other, the diseased joints might be restored, if a healing power were applied; that it was perhaps agreeable to the gods to do this; that the emperor was elected by divine assistance; lastly, that the credit of the success would be the emperor's, the ridicule of the disappointment would fall upon the patients. Vespasian, believing that every thing was in the power of his fortune, and that nothing was any longer incredible, whilst the multitude which stood by eagerly expected the event, with a countenance expressive of joy, executed what he was desired to do. Im-

[1] Campbell on the Miracles, part ii. sect. 4. pp. 153–161.

mediately the hand was restored to its use, and light returned to the blind man. They, who were present, relate both these cures, even at this time, when there is nothing to be gained by lying."[1]

Such is the narrative of the historian, and how little the miracles related by him are entitled to credibility will easily appear from the following considerations: — 1. Supposing the fact of this application to Vespasian to have really taken place as Tacitus relates, the *design* of them was both *political* and *interested:* it was to give weight to the authority of Vespasian, then recently elevated to the throne of imperial Rome by the great men and the army, and to induce the belief that his elevation was approved by the gods. Not so the miracles of Christ and the apostles, which alike exposed their property and their persons to ruin. 2. Tacitus did not write from ocular inspection and personal examination of the men; but, *twenty-seven years afterwards*, wrote from hearsay, at Rome, an account of transactions which had taken place at Alexandria in Egypt: on the contrary, the narratives of the Christian miracles were published in the very countries, and almost immediately after the time, when the miracles had actually been wrought, and when many persons were living who had witnessed them. 3. Though Tacitus mentions the miracles of Vespasian, he does not say that he saw them, or even believed that they were performed; nay, he very plainly insinuates that he did not believe them to be real. 4. The diseases were not absolutely incurable; this is manifest from the declarations of the physicians, who told Vespasian that the sight of the blind man *was not extinct*, and that the lame man's joints *might* recover their strength; and between whom, the emperor, and the patients, the whole seems to have been concerted. But the miracles wrought by Christ were performed on diseases and in other cases which no human skill could relieve. 5. Lastly, consider the witnesses. The miracles of Vespasian were not (like the Christian miracles) performed in the presence of acute and inveterate adversaries, who scrutinised them with the utmost rigour, and yielded a reluctant acknowledgment of their reality; but the witnesses of them were the followers and flatterers of Vespasian, and the ignorant and superstitious Alexandrians, who were wholly devoted to the worship of Serapis, and to his interest.

[v.] The last instance of pagan miracles which we shall notice is that of Apollonius of Tyana, a Pythagorean philosopher, who was born about the time of the Christian æra; but whose life was not written till *more than a century after his death* by Philostratus, who received his information partly from report, and partly from the commentaries of Damis, the companion of Apollonius. In this work, besides a number of monstrous, ridiculous, and silly wonders, Philostratus has related many things which resemble the miracles of Jesus, as that Apollonius cured diseases, expelled demons, gave sight to the blind, raised the dead, and foretold numerous remarkable

[1] Tacitus, Hist. lib. iv. c. 81. The same is also related by Suetonius in Vespasian, c. 8., who says the man was *lame in his legs*,—not in his *hand*, as Tacitus says.

events. The book of Philostratus was compiled at the request of the empress Julia Domna, who hated the Christians: the remarks, therefore, which have already been made on the biographers of Pythagoras may be applied to him.[1] To which we may add, that Apollonius was ridiculed as an impostor by the heathen philosopher Lucian, who wrote twenty years before Philostratus, and that no use was made of his pretended miracles for the disparagement of Christianity until the commencement of the fourth century; when Hierocles, governor of Bithynia, a man of learning, and a principal instigator of the persecution under Dioclesian, conceived the design of showing the futility of the miracles of Christ as proofs of a divine mission, by opposing to them other performances equally beyond the reach of human powers, and, as he wished it to be believed, equally well authenticated. Hierocles, however, did not attempt either to call in question the genuineness of the books of the New Testament, or to deny that miracles were wrought by Jesus Christ; and his work, which was founded on the narrative of Philostratus, was answered at the time by Eusebius, in a tract that is still extant.

[vi.] The next instance produced by Mr. Hume is the miracle pretended to have been wrought at Saragossa, and mentioned by the cardinal De Retz. His words, literally translated, are, — "In that church they showed me a man, whose business it was to light the lamps, of which they have a prodigious number, telling me that he had been seen seven years at the gate with one leg only. I saw him there with two."[2] From this relation it is evident that the cardinal did not attach any credit to the story; he did not examine the man himself concerning the fact. This miracle indeed was vouched by all the canons of the church, and the whole company in town were appealed to for a confirmation of it, whom the cardinal found, by their zealous devotion, to be thorough believers of the miracle. But though those ecclesiastics appealed to the company in the town, it is clear from De Retz's own account that he did not ask any man a single question on the subject. It is easy to conceive that such a story, managed by the priests and backed by their authority, would obtain credit with the ignorant populace; especially in a country where the inquisition was then in full power, — where the superstitions and prejudices of the people, and the authority of the civil magistrate, were all combined to support the credit of such miracles,— and where it would not only have been extremely dangerous to make a strict inquiry into them, but even the expressing of the least doubt concerning them might have exposed the inquirer to the most terrible of all evils and sufferings.[3]

[vii.] The last example of pretended miracles to be adduced is, those reported to have been wrought at the tomb of the Abbé de

[1] Campbell on Miracles, pp. 161—169. Bp. Douglas's Criterion, pp. 49—60. Paley's Evidences, vol. i. pp. 351—355. In the Encyclopædia Metropolitana, vol. x. pp. 619—644., there is an able article on the character and pretended miracles of Apollonius Tyanæus, in the course of which the subject of miracles is discussed at considerable length.

[2] Mémoires du Cardinal de Retz. Livre iv. l'an 1654.

[3] Campbell on the Miracles, pp. 170—181

Paris, and in which both Mr. Hume and his copyists in later times have exulted, as if they were alone sufficient to destroy the credit of the miraculous facts recorded in the New Testament. The circumstances of these pretended miracles are as follows: —

While controversies ran high in France between the Jesuits and the Jansenists [1], about the middle of the eighteenth century, the Abbé de Paris, an opulent and zealous Jansenist, gave the whole of his income to the poor; and, clothing himself in rags, lay on the ground, fed on black bread, water, and herbs, and employed watchings and penances to macerate his body. On his death, in May, 1727, his party canonised him, and pretended that miracles were wrought at his tomb; whither thousands flocked and practised grimaces and convulsions in so disorderly and ridiculous a manner, that the government of France was at length obliged to put a stop to this delusion by ordering the churchyard, in which he was interred, to be walled up in January, 1732. Accounts of the cures said to have been wrought at the Abbé's tomb were collected and published by M. de Montgeron, a counsellor of the parliament at Paris, in three quarto volumes; which were critically examined, and the delusions were exposed as soon as they appeared. On these pretended miracles (which were paralleled with those of Jesus Christ!) we may remark, 1. That they were extolled as real *before* they were subjected to examination; and that, when investigated at first, they were tried before persons who were predisposed to favour the Jansenists or appellants: — 2. Of the many thousand sick, or supposed to be sick, who resorted to the tomb of the Abbé de Paris, Montgeron, who collected the cures said to be wrought at his tomb, produced vouchers for only eight or nine; while some continued there for days, and even months, without receiving any benefit: — 3. The number, reported to be cured, was but small; nor is there any proof that this small number was cured by the pseudo-saint's intercession. The imposture of those pretended miracles was detected by the archbishop of Paris in one single instance; and the archbishop of Sens and others, in more than twenty instances, discovered the artifice by which it was supported: — 4. The patients were so affected by their devotion, the place, and the sympathy of the multitude, that many were thrown into convulsions [2], which in certain circumstances might produce a removal of disorders occasioned

[1] These were a sect of Romanists, in France, who adopted the opinions of Jansenius concerning grace and predestination, which were opposed by the Jesuits.

[2] "Convulsions were so common at the tomb, that the whole scene became in the highest degree discreditable to religion, and so dangerous to public morals, that the burying ground, in which lay the remains of the Abbé, was closed by order of the French government. . . . . The occurrence of the convulsions shows to the medical man, that the diseases, for the cure of which resort was made to the tomb, belonged — many of them — to the imaginary, or half-imaginary class, in which there is so much scope for deception and fallacy. Surveying all the circumstances of this very absurd scene, and considering especially the proportion of recoveries and the time required for accomplishing them, so far from their furnishing evidence of divine interposition, the subject of astonishment is, that the mental excitement and exposure to the air had effected so little, or that, without any adjunct, the course of nature had not produced more. Even homœopathy or a German spa would have effected ten times as much. If there was any miracle at all, it consisted in the paucity of relief." Dr. Brown's Defence of Revealed Religion, p. 204.

by obstruction: — 5. All who implored the aid of the Abbé were not cured; while Christ and the apostles never failed in any case, and were never convicted of imposture in a single instance: and it was objected at the time, and never refuted by his friends, that the prostrations at his tomb *produced* more diseases than they *cured:* — 6. Christ's miracles were wrought in a grave and decent, in a great but simple, manner, becoming one sent of God, without any absurd or ridiculous ceremonies, or superstitious observances. But the miracles attributed to the Abbé de Paris were attended with circumstances that had all the marks of superstition, and which seemed designed and fitted to strike the imagination. The earth of his tomb was often employed, or the water from the well of his house. *Nine* day's devotion was constantly used, and frequently repeated again and again by the same persons: — 7. All the cures recorded by Montgeron as duly attested were partial and gradual, and were such as might have been effected by natural means. *Not one of them was instantaneous.* The persons at the Abbé's tomb never attempted to raise the dead, nor is there any evidence that either the blind or the deaf were actually cured there. The notary, who received affidavits relative to those miracles, was not obliged to know the names of the persons who made them, nor whether they gave in their own or only fictitious names: — 8. The cures wrought at the tomb were not independent of second causes; most of the devotees had been using medicines before, and continued to use them during their applications to the supposed saint; or their distempers had abated before they determined to solicit his help: — 9. Some of the cures attested were *incomplete,* and the relief granted in others was only *temporary;* but the cures wrought by Christ and his apostles were *complete* and *permanent:* — 10. Lastly, the *design* of the miracles ascribed to the Abbé de Paris was neither important nor was it worthy of God. The miracles of Christ and of his apostles, as we have already seen, were intended to prove the divine authority of the most excellent religion: those reported of the Abbé to answer the purposes of a party. The former answered the end for which they were designed: the latter raised a prejudice against Jansenism, and divided its adherents, several of whom were provoked at the frauds of their party, and bitterly reproached and accused each other. The moment the civil power interfered to put an end to the impostures they ceased; but all the powers on earth, both civil and sacerdotal, could not arrest the progress of Christianity, or put a stop to the wonderful works wrought in confirmation of it. To conclude, with regard to the attestations given to Christianity, all was wise, consistent, worthy of God, and suited to the end for which it was designed; but the other is a broken incoherent scheme, which cannot be reconciled to itself, nor made to consist with the wisdom and harmony of the divine proceedings. The miracles of Christ, therefore, are indisputably true; but those ascribed to the Abbé de Paris are totally destitute of reality, and are utterly unworthy of belief.[1]

[1] Campbell on Miracles, pp. 181—203. Vernet, Traité de la Vérité de la Relig. Chrét. tom. vi. pp. 63—135. Leland's View of the Deistical Writers, vol. i. pp. 319—335. 4th

SECT. III.

ON PROPHECY.

I. Prophecy defined.

The various criteria and considerations which have been stated in the preceding section will enable the impartial inquirer to distinguish between true and false miracles. We add, that it is equally easy to distinguish between true and false prophecies; for PROPHECY is *a miracle of knowledge, a declaration, or description, or representation of something future, beyond the power of human sagacity to foresee, discern, or conjecture:* and it is the highest evidence that can be given of supernatural communion with the Deity, and of the truth of a revelation from God.

The knowledge of future events is that object, which man, with the greatest desire, has the least ability to attain. By tracing cause and effect in their usual operations, by observing human characters, and by marking present tendencies, he may form some plausible conjectures about the future; and an experienced politician, who is thoroughly acquainted with the circumstances, interests, and tempers both of his own community and of those who are his neighbours, will frequently anticipate events with a sagacity and success which bears some resemblance to direct prescience, and excites the astonishment of less penetrating minds. Still, however, he is limited to a kind of contact with present circumstances. That which he foresees must have some connection with what he actually beholds, or some dependence on it: otherwise his inquiries are vain, and his conjectures idle and delusive; and even within those narrow limits, how often is his penetration baffled, and his wisdom deceived! The slightest intrusion of uncommon circumstances, the smallest possible deviation from rules, which cannot by any means be rendered exact, destroys the visionary chain which he has constructed, and exposes his ignorance to himself and others. The prescience of the most experienced politician, in short, bears a close resemblance to that of an experienced general or a skilful chess player. Judging how he himself, were he in his adversary's place, would act in consequence of one of his own movements, he builds upon his adversary's acting in the same manner when placed in the same circumstances; and thence, on the presumption of his thus acting, he provides against what he foresees must be the result of it; anticipating in this manner the final winding up of the affair, even when he is at a considerable distance from its termination. Prescience, then, of the present description, will extend just so far as the principle upon which it is built. But the deducing of effects from a combination of causes can never be carried forward to any very remote period; because new causes, which themselves again must be combined, will perpetually spring up; and consequently, as those new causes are as yet unknown, no human sagacity can deduce events from *such* causes.

edit. Bp. Douglas's Criterion, pp. 122—233.: in pp. 233—236. he has some observations on the pretended miracles of the French prophets.

To foresee and foretell future events is a *miracle* of which the testimony remains in itself. It is a miracle, because to foresee and foretell future events, to which no change of circumstances leads, no train of probabilities points, is as much beyond the ability of human agents, as to cure diseases with a word, or even to raise the dead, which may properly be termed *miracles of power*. That actions of the latter kind were ever performed can be proved, at a distant period, only by witnesses, against whose testimony cavils may be raised, or causes for doubt advanced: but the man, who reads a prophecy and perceives the corresponding event, is *himself* the witness of the miracle; he sees that thus it is, and that thus by human means it could not possibly have been. A prophecy yet unfulfilled is a miracle at present incomplete; and these, if numerous, may be considered as the seeds of future conviction, ready to grow up and bear their fruit, whenever the corresponding facts shall be exhibited on the theatre of the world. So admirably has this sort of evidence been contrived by the wisdom of God, that in proportion as the lapse of ages might *seem* to weaken the argument derived from miracles long since performed, that very lapse serves only to strengthen the argument derived from the completion of prophecy.

If the books of the Old and New Testaments be genuine and authentic, that is, were written by the persons to whom they are ascribed, and at or about the times when they profess to have been written (and these points have already been proved to demonstration), the very numerous predictions which they contain must necessarily be divine. For they are a regular chain, extending almost from the beginning to the end of time; and many of them relate to events so distant, so contingent, and so apparently improbable, that no finite mind, no human foresight could ever anticipate them. Some relate to dates and circumstances that require the most exact accomplishment, and some are fulfilling to the present time, and before our eyes: so that, though this kind of evidence might be rendered doubtful or suspicious, yet it is daily accumulating, and gathering strength as it accumulates.

II. On the Difference between the pretended predictions of heathen oracles and the prophecies contained in the Scriptures.

When we meet with a prophecy, the avowed end of which is to satisfy some trivial curiosity, or abet the designs of some ambitious leader, suspicion must necessarily take the alarm. This was evidently the character of the ancient oracles. However directed, whether by evil men or evil spirits, they certainly spoke as they were paid or intimidated; and the long-continued history of ancient times has completely informed us of the practices by which the priests of the false gods endeavoured to gain credit for their idols, and profit for themselves, by foretelling things to come. "But how did they conduct this difficult traffic? Did they make it hazardous as well as difficult, by pledging their lives on the truth of their predictions? Far otherwise:—they had very different arts and plans, much more compatible with the consciousness of being extremely liable to error. In the first place, unless a direct appeal to their inspiration was made by direct inquiry, they usually observed a prudent silence. They uttered no spontaneous

prophecies. In saying nothing, they exposed themselves to no detection; and when they were obliged to speak, it was always with sufficient precaution. Obstacles were first thrown in the way of inquiry. By magnificent and repeated sacrifices, it was rendered extremely expensive. This preliminary had a double advantage: it lessened the number of inquirers, and at the same time secured abundant advantage to the priests. These sacrifices were preceded, attended, and followed by many prescribed ceremonies[1]; the omission or mismanagement of any one of which was sufficient to vitiate the whole proceeding. The gods were not at all times in a humour to be consulted. Omens were to be taken, and auguries examined, which, if unfavourable in any particular, either precluded the inquiry for the present, or required further lustrations, ceremonies, and sacrifices to purify the person who cousulted, and rendered him fit to receive an answer from the gods, or to bring their wayward deities to a temper suitable to the inquiry."[2] When indeed answers were given, the heathen oracles had no determinate scheme, and related to detached, unconnected events; while the prophecies of Scripture respect one great scheme, and point to one person, whose family, country, character, and circumstances, they announce, long before he was born. The heathen oracles spoke what rulers dictated, or what tended to advance the interest of the priests: precepts of morality, and rules of just conduct, were seldom – if ever— delivered from the cave, or from the consecrated tripos. The purest sentiments prevalent among the pagans were either delivered by the philosopher (who had no means of enforcing them), or adorned the pages of the poet: while the Hebrew prophets, on the contrary, boldly reproved kings, enforced the purest morality by the most solemn sanctions, and suffered rather than gained by the predictions which they uttered.[3] They did not prophesy in compliance with the wishes or

[1] Van Dale, De Oraculis, tom. i. p. 3.

[2] Dr. Nares's Connected View of the Prophecies relative to the Christian Church, p. 14.

[3] "Happy had it been for the heathen world, if, upon the subject of morality, their oracles had been invariably silent. The few sentiments which they did deliver were not always grounded upon the severe principles of reason and truth: they varied with the fluctuation of human opinions, and were even accommodated to the prejudices, the passions, and the vices of their votaries. Nay, they frequently even commanded the grossest violations of morality and decorum, and veiled, under the prostituted name of religion, the most flagitious and horrible abominations which have ever been permitted to pollute the annals of the human race. The prophets of the true God were inspired by the purest principles. They actively and invariably exerted themselves in the cause of virtue. The system of morality which they sanctioned was pure, severe, and founded upon determinate and acknowledged principles. They tempered its severity, however, with the love of mercy and the gentle feelings of benevolence. With all the warmth of zeal, and energy of eloquence, they recommended the cause of the stranger, the widow, and the orphan. Neither the pomp of station, nor the tyranny of power, could shield the offender from their manly and indignant rebukes: and exhibiting a boldness, which, perhaps, is unparalleled in the whole history of mankind, and which could only be inspired by the confidence of truth and the certainty of divine assistance, they even chastised a powerful monarch for the unlawful indulgence of his passions; and openly denounced the vengeance of the High Being, by whom they were inspired, against a formidable tyrant, who had murdered for the sake of plunder the poor possessor of a neighbouring vineyard. The piety which they required was not the cold and inefficient duty of an external ritual: it was the religion of the heart, the control of the internal feelings of the soul, and an inward and ever-active persuasion of the existence and providence of an all-judging God. It earnestly excited gratitude for his favours, supplication for his forgiveness, and reliance on his protection. These moral and religious duties were not varied with the progress of civilisation, nor

natural propensities of their countrymen; but opposed their prejudices, by predicting the impending calamities, the humble state of the Messiah, the rejection of the Jews, and the call of the Gentiles. Their prophecies tended to one end; and the total cessation of them, when that end was answered, proves that they did not owe their accomplishment to chance or to imposture.

Further, when no means of evasion remained, the answers given by the heathen oracles were frequently delusive, and capable of quite contrary interpretations; and the most celebrated of them concealed their meaning in such ambiguous terms that they required another oracle to explain them. Of this ambiguity several authentic instances are recorded. Thus, when Crœsus consulted the oracle at Delphi relative to his intended war against the Persians, he was told that he would destroy a great empire.[1] This he naturally interpreted of his overcoming the Persians, though the oracle was so framed as to admit of an opposite meaning. Crœsus made war against the Persians, and was ruined; and the oracle continued to maintain its credit. The answer given to Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, many ages after, was of yet more doubtful interpretation, being conceived in terms so ambiguous, that it might either be interpreted thus:—*I say that thou son of Æacus canst conquer the Romans. Thou shalt go, thou shalt return, never shalt thou perish in war*[2]; or thus, *I say that the Romans can conquer thee, son of Æacus. Thou shalt go, thou shalt never return, thou shalt perish in war.* Pyrrhus understood the oracle in the former sense; he waged an unsuccessful war with the Romans, and was overcome: yet still the juggling oracle saved its credit. Another remarkable instance of the ambiguity of the pretended prophets occurs in 1 Kings xxii. 5, 6. Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, and Ahab, king of Israel, having united their forces against the Syrians, in order to recover Ramoth-Gilead, the latter monarch *gathered the* false *prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up, for the Lord shall deliver* [*it*] *into the hands of the king.* It is to be observed, that the word [*it*] is not in the original, and that the reply of the pseudo-prophets is so artfully constructed, that it might be interpreted either *for* or *against* the expedition; as thus,—*the Lord will deliver* (it) Ramoth-Gilead *into the king's* (Ahab's) *hand;* or, *the Lord will deliver* (Israel) *into the king's*

made to bend to temporal occurrences, to the will of a favoured monarch, or the caprices of contending parties. They were independent of human events, regular as the order of nature, and eternal as the Fountain of inspiration. Their influence was the most extensive which the imagination can conceive. They were not calculated to aggrandise a favourite state, nor appropriated to the inhabitants of a particular climate; but they were equally useful to all countries, and obligatory on the whole human race." Dr. Richards's Bampton Lectures, for 1800, pp. 241—244.

[1] Herodotus, lib. i. c. 53. Though the identical words of the oracle have been lost from the text of Herodotus, yet they have been preserved by various writers, and particularly by Suidas, (Lexicon, voce Κροισος, tom. iii. p. 382. edit. Kuster,) according to whom they run thus: Κροισος Ἅλυν διαβὰς μεγάλην ἄρχην καταλύσει.

[2] The oracle in question has been thus translated:—

Aio te Æacida Romanos vincere posse.
Ibis, redibis, nunquam in bello peribis.

hand, that is, into the hands of the king of Syria.[1] Relying upon this ambiguous oracle, the monarchs of Judah and Israel engaged the Syrians, and were utterly discomfited.

Whenever the oracles failed, the priests, who officiated at them, were never at a loss for subterfuges for preserving their credit. If the event happened not to correspond with the prophecy, it was discovered, when too late, that some indispensable ceremony or observance had been omitted; that the gods were averse to the inquirer; or that he had not been in a proper state for consulting them. If an *evil* event took place, when a *good* one had been promised, it was the fault of the inquirer. If, on the contrary, the result was more favourable than the prediction, this was owing to the intercession of the priests, to the prayers they had offered, or to the rites they had performed for propitiating the offended powers. But notwithstanding all these and other precautions, the heathen priests succeeded very imperfectly in maintaining the credit of the oracles. The wiser and more sagacious heathens, especially in later times, held them in utter contempt.[2] They were ridiculed by the comic poets; and the pretendedly inspired priestess was, in several instances, even popularly accused of being bribed to prophesy according to the interests of a particular party. Such was the success of false prophecy, even with all the aids of art, and a systematic plan of imposture to preserve it from detection.[3]

How widely different from these pretended predictions are the prophecies contained in the Scriptures! They were delivered without solicitation, and pronounced openly before the people; and the prophet

[1] Dr. A. Clarke on 1 Kings xxii. 15.

[2] Thus Aristotle observes, with his usual accuracy and penetration, that "*pretended prophets* express themselves in *general* language. In a game at odd and even, a man may say, whether the number be odd or even, much sooner than *what* it is; and that such a thing *will* happen, than *when*. Therefore those who deliver oracles never define *when*." (Aristot. Rhet. lib. iii. c. 5. § 4. Op. tom. iv. edit. Bipont.)—Cicero likewise has the following remark: "If this be foretold, *Who* is the PERSON meant and *what* is the TIME? The writer has conducted himself so dexterously, that *any* event whatever will suit his *prophecy*, since there is NO *specification of men and times*." (De Divinat. lib. ii. c. 54. Op. tom. xi. p. 287. edit. Bipont.) Horace also ridicules with great humour the pompous nothingness of the heathen oracles in the following verses:—

O Laërtiade, quicquid dicam, aut erit, aut non;
Divinare etenim magnus mihi donat Apollo. Sat. lib. ii. sat. 6. v. 59, 60.

O son of Laertes, what I now foretell, will either come to pass, or it will not;
For the great Apollo gives me to divine.

Lastly, Lucian, in his history of Alexander, after relating in what manner that impostor pretended to answer the sealed questions delivered to him, without opening the seal, adds:—"Thus he delivered oracles, and gave divine responses, but with great prudence, and *giving perplexed, doubtful, or obscure answers, according to the custom of oracles.* Some he encouraged; others he dissuaded, replying as he thought proper. To some he prescribed plain remedies and diets, for he knew many useful medicines. But, with respect to the hopes (of advancement), the increase of property, and successions to inheritances, *he always deferred* giving an answer, adding, *All things shall be done when I am willing, and when my prophet Alexander shall intreat me, and shall offer prayers in your behalf.*"—It is to be observed that this impostor spoke in the name of the god Æsculapius; and that he did not give his responses for *nothing*, his stated price being one drachma and two oboli (about 10½*d.* sterling) for each answer. Luciani Alexander seu Pseudomantis. Op. tom. v. pp. 85, 86. edit. Bipont.

[3] Nares on Prophecy, p. 16.

knew himself by law exposed to capital punishment, if any one of his predictions were to be overthrown. The events which were foretold were often both complicated and remote, depending on the arbitrary will of many, and arising from a great variety of causes, which concurred to bring them to pass. Some of them were accomplished shortly after they were delivered; others had their accomplishment somewhat later, but the prophets who delivered them saw the event. Others again had a more distant object which exceeded the prophet's life; but the different events which he foretold were so connected together, that the most distant bordered pretty nearly upon some others, the accomplishment of which was preparatory to the last. The fulfilment of the first prophecies served to raise an expectation of those which were distant; and the accomplishment of the last confirmed the first. The predictions of Isaiah will furnish an illustration of the correctness of these remarks; and whoever reads the prophets with attention will readily find many more instances.

The kings of Syria and Israel[1], who separately had done great damage to the kingdom of Judah, united together absolutely to destroy it, and came to lay siege to Jerusalem. Ahaz, king of Judah, and all his subjects, being seized with terror, the prophet Isaiah came to him, and publicly assured him that the enterprise of the two kings should be frustrated; that in a short time they would both die; and that, before a child, that was to be born in about ten months, could say, "My father and my mother," Damascus, the capital of Syria, and Samaria, the capital of the kingdom of Israel, should be subject to the king of Assyria. Within *three* short years the event justified the prophecy in all its parts, though it was without any natural probability.[2] — The destruction of Sennacherib's army, together with all the minute circumstances of his previous advance, was announced by Isaiah a long time before it happened, with this additional circumstance, that such destruction should take place in the night; and that the noise of the thunder that should roll over the Assyrians should be to Jerusalem an harmonious sound, and like a melodious concert, because it would be followed with public thanksgivings.[3] It was these precise and circumstantial predictions that supported the hope of Hezekiah, notwithstanding every thing seemed to oppose it. Nor can it excite our astonishment that, after their accomplishment, the pious monarch and his people were persuaded that Isaiah was a prophet, to whom the Almighty revealed his designs, and that he spoke by his command. — In like manner, after the departure of the ambassadors, whom Merodach-Baladan, king of Babylon, had sent to congratulate Hezekiah on his recovery from sickness, the same prophet was commissioned to tell the Jewish sovereign that all his treasures (which in the secret pride of his heart he had shown to his ambassadors) should be conveyed to Babylon; that princes descended from him should be made captives; and that they should be employed by the conqueror in menial offices.[4] This

[1] Isa. vii. 1. 9—16. [2] Isa. viii. 2—4.; 2 Kings xv. 29, 30., xvi. 9.; Isa. viii. 7, 8.
[3] Isa. x. 26. 28. *et seq.*, xxix. 6—8., xxx. 29. 31, 32.
[4] Compare Isa. xxxix. 5—7 and 2 Kings xx.

prediction was apparently contrary to all probability: the kings of Babylon and Judah were then allies and united in interest. The former seemed in no respect formidable, when compared with the kings of Assyria, whose yoke he had but just shaken off, and to whom he was, perhaps, still tributary; and yet the prophecy is positive, and Hezekiah entertained no doubt of it. It was literally accomplished, and then the Jews hoped for their return from captivity, which Isaiah had not only foretold many times, and in the most magnificent terms[1], but also marked out the conqueror of Babylon, and the deliverer of the Jews by name[2], considerably more than one hundred years before Cyrus became king of Persia, and liberated the captive Jews.—Lastly, Isaiah clearly declared the ruin of Babylon, after he had seen, in prophetic spirit, all its splendour and glory under Nebuchadnezzar[3]; and it is astonishing with what exactness all the parts of his predictions were accomplished.

Once more, a large proportion of the Scripture prophecies was committed to writing, and preserved in books which were always left open to public examination, and all persons were enjoined to peruse them. This is a test which the spurious predictions of the heathens *never* could endure. Their oracles were never collected in any authentic records; never brought into one view, with even a pretence to prove the prescience of their deities. Certain officers only were allowed to superintend them. In Egypt, the oracular books were kept by the priests exclusively, and written in a peculiar character; and at Rome the Sibylline books were allowed to be consulted only by the quindecemviri, and not even by these privileged few without an order from the senate. And when at length a compilation was offered to the world, professing to contain the Sibylline oracles, it was so gross and clumsy a forgery as never to impose on any man of sense, who exerted even the smallest skill in bringing it to the test of criticism.[4]

It is a remark, which holds alike in every circumstance of divine revelation, *that impostors never did attempt to produce their credentials in such a manner as the real messengers of God.* Yet does the malice or the blindness of its opposers continually endeavour to confound them. Because there have been lying prophets, the true must be suspected; because there have been false prophets — pretenders to inspiration — therefore they to whom the Spirit of God has truly spoken cannot obtain a candid hearing. Yet, if the things considered differ most essentially in the mode, in the circumstances, in the proof, — in all respects, indeed, except the name, — where is the candour, or even the common sense, of involving them in one sentence of rejection?[5] The false pretensions to prophecy which have appeared in the world are no more a proof that there never were true predictions, than the circulation of base coin proves

[1] See particularly Isa. lii. 2. and lxii. 4.

[2] Isa. xliv. and xlv.

[3] Isa. xlvii. 1. 7, 8, 9. 12, 13., xiii. 4. 19, 20, 21. *et seq.*, xiv. 22—24.

[4] Dr. Jortin has examined the pretended Sibylline oracles, and has shown that they are to be rejected as forgeries and impostures. Remarks on Eccl. Hist. vol. i. pp. 188—217.

[5] Nares on Prophecy, p. 22.

that there is no pure gold or silver employed in commerce and manufactures.

III. The Use and Intent of Prophecy may be considered in various lights. Some have represented it as designed to meet and accommodate the natural anxiety and impatience of men to know futurity — to relieve and soothe the troubled mind — to repress the vain and froward — to discourage schemes of vice — to support desponding virtue. Some have argued, that prophecy was designed to cherish and promote a religious spirit — to confirm the faith of God's sovereignty and particular providence. Some, measuring the thoughts and ways of God by those of men, have fancied, that an obscure people, a carpenter's son, his birth, and acts, and ignominious death, were subjects beneath the attention of the Supreme Ruler; and have substituted, as more becoming objects of prophecy, the splendid events, as they supposed, of the rise and fall of kingdoms, and the revolutions of mighty states and empires. But the ways of God are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. The events which to us appear magnificent and interesting are trivial in his sight, and those which we might overlook or despise form the principal figures in the plan of his infinite wisdom and goodness. There were intermediate events predicted, as subordinate ends of prophecy, as the state and history of Abraham's, and Jacob's, and David's family; but the great use and intent of prophecy, to which all others were subservient, was to maintain the faith of the Messiah, and to prepare the world for his appearance and mediation. At the same time, it was calculated to serve as an evidence of the divine origin of Scripture. Considering it in this light, we should first satisfy ourselves that it was given, not after, but long before the events took place; and then carefully compare the facts and circumstances predicted with the events accomplished. If they correspond, the conclusion is unavoidable, that the prophet was commissioned by Omniscience to utter the prophecy, and that it has been fulfilled by sovereign and almighty power. Have Jacob and Moses, David and Isaiah, Daniel and the other prophets, many hundreds of years before, accurately described times, places, characters, and ends, with their relative circumstances and contingencies? and have these descriptions been verified in subsequent and exactly corresponding events? — then they must have been divinely inspired, and their record and testimony must be true and divine. By these prophecies, interspersed with the greater part of the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testaments, the sacred writers have established their claim to inspiration, that *they have not followed cunningly devised fables, but that they spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* The use and intent of prophecy, then, was to raise expectation, and to soothe the mind with hope, — to maintain the faith of a particular providence, and the assurance of the Redeemer promised, and particularly to attest the divine inspiration of the Scriptures.[1]

[1] Dr. Ranken's Institutes of Theology, pp. 346, 347. See also Bp. Sherlock's Discourses on the Use and Intent of Prophecy.

IV. On the Chain of Prophecy.

The prophecies recorded in the Scriptures respect contingencies too wonderful for the powers of man to conjecture or to effect. Many of those, which are found in the Old Testament, foretold unexpected changes in the distribution of earthly power; and, whether they announced the fall of flourishing cities, or the ruin of mighty empires, the event minutely corresponded with the prediction. This chain of predictions is so evident in the Scriptures, that we are more embarrassed with the selection and arrangement of them, than doubtful of their import and accomplishment. To a superficial observer, they may seem to be without order or connection; but, to a well-informed mind, they are all disposed in such a mode and succession as to form a regular system, all the parts of which harmonise in one amazing and consistent plan, which runs parallel with the history of mankind, past, present, and to come; and furnishes a perfect moral demonstration that the book which contains such predictive information is indeed divine. The prophecies contained in the Scriptures may be referred to four classes, viz. Prophecies relating to the Jewish nation in particular,— Prophecies relating to the neighbouring nations or empires, — Prophecies directly announcing the Messiah, — and Prophecies delivered by Jesus Christ and his apostles.

Class I.

Prophecies relating to the Jewish nation in particular.

1. We begin with Abraham, the great progenitor of the Jews. At a time when he had no child, and was greatly advanced in years, it was foretold that his posterity should be exceedingly multiplied above that of other nations. The chief of these predictions are to be found in Gen. xii. 1—3., xlvi. 3.; Exod. xxxii. 13.; Gen. xiii. 16., xv. 5., xvii. 2. 4—6., xxii. 17.

The fulfilment of these predictions will be found as it respects the Jews (to omit the vast increase of Abraham's other posterity) in Exod. i. 7. 9. 12.; Numb. xxiii. 10.; Deut. i. 10., x. 22.; Ezek. xvi. 7.; Heb. xi. 12. In less than five hundred years after the first of the above predictions was delivered, the number of the Israelites amounted to six hundred thousand men, besides women and children; and the Scripture accounts of their numbers are so confirmed by the testimonies of profane authors, that no doubt *can* arise as to the exactness of the completion.

2. Ishmael's name and fortune were announced before he was born; particularly, that his descendants should be very numerous, and that he should beget twelve princes. The whole came to pass precisely as it was foretold. Compare Gen. xvi. 10—12., xvii. 20., and xxv. 12—18. *I will make him a great nation,* said Jehovah to Abraham (Gen. xvii. 20.); and this prediction was accomplished as soon as it could be in the regular course of nature.

From Ishmael proceeded the various tribes of Arabs (also called Saracens, by Christian writers), who anciently were, and still continue to be, a very powerful people. They might, indeed, be emphatically styled a *great nation,* when the Saracens made their rapid and extensive conquests during the middle ages, and erected one of the largest empires that ever was in the world. *He will be a wild man* (Gen. xvi. 12.), literally, *a wild-ass man,* that is, as wild as a wild ass; and the account

of that animal, in Job xxxix. 5—8., affords the best possible description of the wandering, lawless, and free-booting lives and manners of the Arabs. *Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass? whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.* God himself has *sent them out free*, and *has loosed them* from all political restraint. The same *wilderness*, in which their ancestor, Ishmael, dwelt more than three thousand seven hundred years ago, is still *their habitation*, and *in the barren land*, where no other human beings could live, they *have their dwellings*. They *scorn the city*, and therefore have no fixed habitations. For their *multitude*, they are not afraid. Plundering is their profession; and when they make depredations on cities, towns, or caravans, they retire into the desert with such precipitancy, that all pursuit is eluded; and in this respect, *the crying of the driver is disregarded*. They may be said to have no lands, and yet the range *of the mountains is their pasture;* they pitch their tents and feed their flocks wherever they please; and they *search after every green thing*, are continually looking after prey, and seize every kind of property that comes in their way. It was further foretold that Ishmael's *hand should be against every man, and every man's hand against him*. Sesostris, Cyrus, Pompey, Trajan, and other ancient sovereigns vainly attempted to subjugate the wandering Arabs: though they had temporary triumphs over some tribes, they were ultimately unsuccessful. "Their alliance is never courted, and can never be obtained; and all that the Turks, or Persians, or any of their neighbours, can stipulate for from them is a partial and purchased forbearance. Even the British, who have established a residence in almost every country, have entered the territories of the descendants of Ishmael to accomplish only the premeditated destruction of a fort, and to retire."[1] From the commencement of the Ishmaelites to the present day, they have continued wild or uncivilised, and have maintained their independency: and if there were no other argument to evince the divine origin of the Pentateuch, the account of Ishmael, and the prophecy concerning his descendants, collated with their history and manner of life during a period of nearly four thousand years, would be sufficient; it may, indeed, be pronounced absolutely demonstrative.[2]

3. It was foretold that the POSTERITY OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB, should possess the land of Canaan[3]; so that, though they should be expelled thence for their sins, yet their title should endure, and they should be resettled in it, and there continue in peace to the end of the world. (See Gen. xii. 7., xiii. 14, 15. 17., xv. 18—21.; Exod. iii. 8. 17.; Gen. xvii. 7, 8.) In unison also with these original promises are the predictions, that this land of Canaan should be to the children of Israel an everlasting possession. (See Deut. xxx. 1—5.; Jer. xxx. 3.)

The completion of these predictions has been as remarkable and exact as the predictions themselves. (See Numb. xxi.; Deut. ii.; and Josh. iii.) The Israelites enjoyed this land for above a thousand years; and when, for their wickedness, God sent the tribes of Judah and Benjamin into captivity, he declared it should be but for seventy years, which accordingly was true; and they continued six hundred years together, till by their rejection and murder of the Messiah they were again doomed to a more lasting captivity, begun by Titus Vespasian, and continued to this day. And though the ten tribes carried away captive by Shalmaneser, and the body of the two tribes by Titus, are not now in Canaan; yet since the period of their final restoration is not yet come, their present case is so far from being an objection against these ancient prophecies before us, that it would be a great one against the others if it were so. And he who considers that the prediction, now under con-

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[1] Dr. Keith's Evidence, &c., from Prophecy p. 517. 36th edition.

[2] For a full account and exposition of the prophecies concerning Ishmael, see Bishop Newton's second Dissertation.

[3] On the fulfilment of the predictions concerning Judæa, the reader is necessarily referred to Mr. Wylie's Modern Judæa compared with Ancient Prophecy. Glasgow, 1850, 8vo.

sideration, has hitherto been exactly fulfilled in all the periods already past, cannot doubt of the fulfilling of what remains to come in its proper season, and will not question but that God will ultimately and completely, as he promised, give to the seed of Abraham all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. See Ezek. xxxvii. 25.

4. The twenty-eighth chapter of the book of Deuteronomy contains a series of most striking predictions relative to the JEWS, which are fulfilling to this very day. Bp. Newton and Dr. Graves have shown its accomplishment at great length.[1] To specify a very few particulars:—

(1.) Moses *foretold that they should be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, — "scattered among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other, — find no ease or rest, — be oppressed and crushed always, — be left few in number among the heathen, — pine away in their iniquity in their enemies' land, — and become an astonishment, a proverb, and a bye-word unto all nations."*

These predictions were literally fulfilled during the subjection of the Jews to the Chaldæans and Romans; and, in later times, in all nations where they have been dispersed. Moses foretold that their enemies would besiege and take their cities; and this prophecy was fulfilled by Shishak king of Egypt, Shalmaneser king of Assyria, Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus Epiphanes, Sosius, and Herod, and, finally, by Titus. Though dispersed throughout all nations, they have remained distinct from them all; and notwithstanding the various oppressions and persecutions to which they have in every age been exposed in different parts of the world, "there is not a country on the face of the earth where the Jews are unknown. They are found alike in Europe, Asia, America, and Africa. They are citizens of the world, without a country. Neither mountains, nor rivers, nor deserts, nor oceans, — which are the boundaries of other nations, — have terminated their wanderings. They abound in Poland, in Holland, in Russia, and in Turkey. In Germany, Spain, Italy, France, and Britain, they are more thinly scattered. In Persia, China, and India, — on the east and the west of the Ganges, — they are *few in number among the heathen.* They have trod the snows of Siberia, and the sands of the burning desert; and the European traveller hears of their existence in regions which he cannot reach, — even in the very interior of Africa, south of Timbuctoo.[2] From Moscow to Lisbon, — from Japan to Britain, — from Borneo to Archangel, — from Hindostan to Honduras, — no inhabitant of any nation upon earth would be known in all the intervening regions but a Jew alone."[3]

(2.) Moses *foretold that such grievous famines should prevail during the sieges of their cities, that they should eat the flesh of their sons and daughters.*

This prediction was fulfilled about six hundred years after the time of Moses, among the Israelites, when Samaria was besieged by the king of Syria; again, about nine hundred years after Moses, among the Jews, during the siege of Jerusalem before the Babylonish captivity; and, finally, fifteen hundred years after his time, during the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans.

(3.) *Though the Hebrews were to be as the stars of heaven for multitude, Moses predicted that they should be few in number.*

This prophecy was literally fulfilled in the last siege of Jerusalem, in which Jose-

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[1] Bishop Newton on the Prophecies, vol. i. diss. vii. Dr. Graves on the Pentateuch. vol. ii. pp. 417—443. See also Mr. Kett's History the Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. i. pp. 87—122.

[2] Lyon's Travels in Africa, p. 146.

[3] Keith's Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion from the Fulfilment of Prophecy, p. 81. (36th edition.) In pp. 80—260. there is a copious and excellently arranged digest of the predictions respecting the Jews, and their accomplishment.

phus tells us that an infinite multitude perished by famine; and he computes the total number who perished by it and by the war in Jerusalem, and other parts of Judæa, at one million two hundred and forty thousand four hundred and ninety, besides ninety-nine thousand two hundred who were made prisoners, and *sold unto their enemies for bondmen and bondwomen:* and after their last overthrow by Hadrian, many thousands of them were sold; and those for whom purchasers could not be found (Moses had foretold that *no man would buy them*) were transported into Egypt, where multitudes perished by shipwreck or famine, or were massacred by the inhabitants. Since the destruction of Jerusalem, they have been scattered among all nations, *among whom they have found no ease, nor have the soles of their feet had rest:* they have been *oppressed and spoiled ever more*, especially in the East, where the tyranny exercised over them is so severe, as to afford a literal fulfilment of the prediction of Moses, that *thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt* HAVE NONE *assurance of thy life*. (Deut. xxviii. 66.)[1] Yet, notwithstanding all their oppressions, they have still continued a separate people, without incorporating with the natives; *and they have become an astonishment and a by-word among all the nations*, whither they have been carried, since their punishment has been inflicted. The very name of a Jew has been used as a term of peculiar reproach and infamy. Finally, it was foretold that *their plagues should be wonderful, even great plagues, and of long continuance.* And have not their plagues continued more than seventeen hundred years? In comparison of them, their former captivities were very short: during their captivity in Chaldæa, Ezekiel and Daniel prophesied; but now they have no true prophet to foretell the end of their calamities. What nation has suffered so much, and yet endured so long? What nation has subsisted as a distinct people in their own country so long as the Jews have done in their dispersion into all countries? And what a *standing miracle* is thus exhibited to the world, in the fulfilment, at this very time, of prophecies

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[1] "The condition of the Jews in Palestine is more *insecure*, and exposed to insult and exaction, than in Egypt and Syria, from the frequent lawless and oppressive conduct of the governors and chiefs." (Carne's Letters from the East, p. 305.) The quarter of Jerusalem, now inhabited by the Jews (all travellers attest), presents nothing but filth and wretchedness. "Poor wretches! everything about them exhibited signs of depression and misery: outcasts from the common rights and sympathies of men,— oppressed and despised alike by Mahometans and Christians,—living as aliens in the inheritance of their fathers,— what an awful lesson of unbelief do they hold out!" (Three Weeks in Palestine, p. 69.) The Rev. Wm. Jowett, speaking of the actual state of the Jews in the East, relates the following circumstances (on the authority of a gentleman who had for some years been the British consul at Tripoli), which strikingly illustrate the accomplishment of prophecy, as well as the state of degradation in which the Jews there live. "The life of a man seems to be there valued no more than the life of a moth. If the Bey has a fear of jealousy of any man, he sends some one to put a pistol to his head and shoot him. If it happens to be a Christian, remonstrance is made by the consul of his nation: the Bey is quite ready to give satisfaction: he sends some one to shoot the first agent of his cruelty; and then, with an air of great regret, asks the consul if he is satisfied; if not, he is ready to give him satisfaction still further. But if the object of his wrath be a Jew, no one would think of demanding satisfaction for HIS death. This people feel the curse in full, that, among the nations where they are scattered, they should *find no ease, and have none assurance of their life.* They are known, by their being compelled to wear a particular dress, which they sometimes change IN THEIR OWN HOUSES, on occasion of their merry-makings; but even in these they are not free, the Moors exercising the privilege of free ingress at any time. When a vessel comes into port, the merchant (a Mahomedan) compels every Jew whom he meets by the way to come and help in unlading, carrying, &c.; nor do they dare to resist." (Jowett's Christian Researches in the Mediterranean, p. 231. London, 1822. 8vo. See also his Christian Researches in Syria, pp. 232—234. London, 1825. 8vo.) Nor is the situation of the Jews in Persia much better. "It is disgusting," says a recent intelligent traveller, "to see the way in which the Persians abuse and oppress the unfortunate Israelites. When a Persian wishes to have the snow cleaned from his flat-roofed house, he goes into a street, and catches a Jew, and obliges him to perform the office. For the murder of a Jew, a Persian has only to cut round a finger, so as to draw blood, and the offence is expiated." (Alexander's Travels from India to England, p. 178. London, 1827. 4to.) On the degraded and insecure state of the Jews in Turkey, Mr. Hartley has collected some painfully interesting anecdotes. (Researches in Greece, pp. 202—208.)

delivered considerably more than three thousand years ago! What a permanent attestation is it to the divine legation of Moses!

5. JOSIAH was prophetically announced by name, three hundred and sixty-one years before the event (1 Kings xiii. 2.) by a prophet, who came out of Judah on purpose to denounce the judgments of God upon the priests of the altar, and upon the altar itself, which Jeroboam had then recently erected at Bethel.

The delivery of this prediction was accompanied with two miracles; one wrought upon Jeroboam, by the drying up of his hand, which he had raised against the prophet, at whose prayer it was restored to him again; the other miracle was performed upon the altar by rending it and pouring the ashes from it. The fulfilment of this prophecy was no less remarkable, plainly showing it to be, — not from man, but from God. (2 Kings xxiii. 15.)

6. ISAIAH predicted the utter subversion of idolatry among the Jews. (ii. 18—21.)

On their return from the Babylonish captivity, more than two hundred years afterwards, they were perfectly cured of this strange infatuation. — The same prophet foretold, that general distress and ruin would befall the Jewish people, on account of their extreme wickedness; and within two hundred years afterwards the calamities denounced overtook them. (Isaiah iii. 1—14. compared with 2 Chron. xxxvi.) On the capture, however, of Jerusalem by the Chaldæans, a few poor persons were left to till the land, precisely as Isaiah had prophesied. (Isa. xxiv. 13, 14. compared with Jer. xxxix. 10.)

7. JEREMIAH foretold the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar, and the captivity of the Jews by him, in so remarkable and solemn a manner, that it was notorious to all the neighbouring nations.

According to the custom of delivering prophecies by visible signs, as well as words, he sent bonds and yokes "to the kings of Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, Tyre, and Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which came to Jerusalem (from these several kings) unto Zedekiah king of Judah;" and foretold, "that all these nations should serve Nebuchadnezzar and his son, and his son's son." (Jer. xxvii. 3—7.) And the Jews put him in prison for this prophecy; where he was kept, when Nebuchadnezzar took the city, and set him at liberty. (xxxix. 11—14.) This prophet was opposed and contradicted by several false prophets, who prophesied deceitful and flattering delusions to the people, persuading them that no evil should come upon them; of whom Jeremiah foretold, that Hananiah should die that same year in which he uttered his false prophecies (xxviii. 16, 17.), and that Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, should be taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar, and slain in the sight of the people of Judah, and roasted in the fire. (xxix. 21, 22.) And thus distinctly foretelling the time and manner of the death of those false prophets, he vindicated his own prophecies, which were at first so unwillingly believed, beyond all contradiction. But that which seemed most strange, and was most objected against, in the prophecies of Jeremiah, was his prediction concerning the death of Zedekiah; in which he and Ezekiel were thought to contradict each other. Jeremiah prophesied in Jerusalem, at the same time when Ezekiel prophesied in Babylon, and concerning the same things; and Jeremiah's prophecy was sent to the captives in Babylon, and Ezekiel's to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Now these two prophets, writing of the captivity of Zedekiah, enumerate all the circumstances of it between them, in such a manner, that they were believed to contradict each other; and thus the expectation and attention of the people were the more excited to observe the fulfilment of their prophecies. (Compare Jer. xxxiv. 2—7. and Ezek. xii. 13.) Jeremiah said that he should see the king of Babylon, and be carried to Babylon; Ezekiel, that he should not see Babylon: Jeremiah, that he should die in peace, and be buried after the manner of his ancestors; Ezekiel, that he should die at Babylon. And if we compare all this with the history, nothing ever was more punctually fulfilled: for Zedekiah saw the king of Babylon, who commanded his eyes to be put out, before he was brought to

Babylon; and he died there, but died peaceably, and was suffered to have the usual funeral solemnities. (Jer. xxxix. 4. 7.; 2 Kings xxv. 6, 7.) Therefore *both* prophecies proved true in the event, which before seemed to be inconsistent. And so critical an exactness in every minute circumstance, in prophecies delivered by two persons, who were before thought to contradict each other, was such a conviction to the Jews, after they had seen them so punctually fulfilled, in their captivity, that they could no longer doubt but that *both* were from God.

8. While Ezekiel was a captive in Chaldæa, he prophesied that the Jews, who still remained in Judæa, should be severely chastised for their wickedness; that one third part of them should die with the pestilence and famine; that another third part should perish by the sword; and that the remainder should be scattered into all the winds; and that even then the sword should follow them. In a very few years all these evils came upon them by the hand of the Chaldæans.[1]

9. The Profanation of the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes, together with his death, and a description of his temper, and even of his countenance, was clearly foretold by Daniel, four hundred and eight years before the accomplishment of his prediction. (Dan. viii.) He likewise prophesied the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, the desolation of that city, and also of Judæa, and the cessation of the Jewish sacrifices and oblations. (ix. 26, 27.) The accomplishment of these predictions is attested by all history.

10. Lastly, Hosea foretold the present State of the people of Israel, in these remarkable words:—*They shall be wanderers among the nations.* (ix. 17.) And the literal fulfilment of this prediction is attested by the fact, that "the Jews, though dispersed among all nations, are not confounded with them: they are a distinct people, known as separate from every other. They retain in every quarter of the globe the distinctive characters, the usages, and the religion of the Jews. In every land they are recognised as the same people,—the same as when Vespasian, at the head of a Roman army, besieged Jerusalem. All other ancient nations have been mingled and lost in the common mass of mankind; but they are now as much a known and separate people, as they were three thousand years ago."[2]

The preceding are only a small number in comparison of the multitude of predictions (nearly two hundred) that might have been adduced; and which refer to the Israelites and Jews, and other descendants of Abraham. We now proceed to

Class II.

Prophecies relating to the Nations or Empires that were neighbouring to the Jews.

1. Tyre was one of the most flourishing and opulent cities of ancient times. The inhabitants became very wicked and abandoned; and the Hebrew prophets were commanded to foretell its ruin. At the time their predictions were uttered, the city was extremely prosperous, successful in commerce, and abounding in riches and glory. These pre-

[1] Ezek. v. 12. and viii.; and, for the fulfilment, see Prideaux's Connection, part i. book i. sub anno 588. vol. i. pp. 80—84. 8th edit.

[2] Dr. Dewar's Divine Revelation, &c., p. 400. (London, 1854.)

dictions were extremely minute and circumstantial[1]; and announced that the city was to be taken and destroyed by the Chaldeans (who, at the time of the delivery of the prophecy, were an inconsiderable people), and particularly by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; that the inhabitants should flee over the Mediterranean into the adjacent islands and countries, and even there should not find a quiet settlement; that the city should be restored after seventy years, and return to her gain and merchandise; that it should be taken and destroyed a second time; that the people should, in time, forsake their idolatry, and become converts to the worship and true religion of God; and, finally, that the city should be totally destroyed, and become a place only for fishers to spread their nets upon. All these predictions were literally fulfilled[2]: for want of room, we are compelled to notice here only those predictions which denounce its utter destruction.

Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God. (Ezek. xxvi. 3—5.) To show the certainty of the destruction, the prophet repeats it: (ver. 14.) *I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more, for I the Lord have spoken it.* And again, *I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more; though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God.* (ver. 21.) *All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.* (xxviii. 19.)

These various predictions received their accomplishment by degrees. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the old city; and Alexander the Great employed its ruins and rubbish in making a causeway from the continent to the island whereon it had been erected, both of which were henceforth joined together. "It is no wonder, therefore," as a learned traveller has remarked[3], "that there are no signs of the ancient city; and as it is a sandy shore, the face of every thing is altered, and the great aqueduct in many parts is almost buried in the sand." So that, as to this part of the city, the prophecy has literally been fulfilled, "Thou shalt be built no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again." It may be questioned, whether the new city ever after arose to that height of power, wealth, and greatness, to which it was elevated in the times of Isaiah and Ezekiel. It received a great blow from Alexander, not only by his taking and burning the city, but much more by his building of Alexandria in Egypt, which in time deprived it of much of its trade, and thus contributed more effectually to its ruin. It had the misfortune afterwards of changing its masters often, being sometimes in the hands of the Ptolemies, kings of Egypt, and sometimes of the Selęucidæ, kings of Syria, till at length it fell under the dominion of the Romans. It was taken by the Saracens[4] about the year of Christ 639, in the reign of Omar their third emperor. It was retaken by the Christians[5] during the time of the holy war, in the year 1124,

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[1] See Isa. xxiii.; Jer. xxv.; Ezek. xxvi. xxvii. xxviii.; Amos i. 9, 10.; Zech. ix. 1—8.

[2] See a copious illustration of them in Bp. Newton's eleventh Dissertation, and in Rollin's Ancient History, book xv. sect. 6. vol. v. pp. 94—102.

[3] Bp. Pococke's Description of the East, vol. ii. pp. 81, 82.

[4] Ockley's Hist. of the Saracens, vol. i. p. 340.

[5] Abul-Pharajii Hist. Dyn. 9. p. 250. Vers. Pocockii. Savage's Abridgment of Knolles and Rycaut, vol. i. p. 26.

Baldwin, the second of that name, being then king of Jerusalem, and assisted by a fleet of the Venetians. From the Christians[1] it was taken again, in the year 1289, by the Mamelukes of Egypt, under their Sultan Alphix, who sacked and razed this and Sidon, and other strong towns, in order that they might never afford any harbour or shelter to the Christians. From the Mamelukes it was again taken in the year 1516, by Selim, the ninth emperor of the Turks; and under their dominion it continues at present. But, alas, how fallen, how changed from what it was formerly! For from being the centre of trade, frequented by all the merchant ships of the east and west, it is now become a heap of ruins, visited only by the boats of a few poor fishermen. So that, as to this part likewise of the city, the prophecy has literally been fulfilled, — *I will make thee like the top of a rock; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon.*[2]

How utterly this once flourishing city is now destroyed, agreeably to the divine predictions, every traveller attests who has visited its site. We select two or three of the most striking.

Dr. Shaw, who travelled in the former part of the last century, says, "I visited several creeks and inlets, in order to discover what provision there might have been formerly made for the security of their vessels. Yet notwithstanding that Tyre was the chief maritime power of this country, I could not observe the least token of either *cothon* or harbour that could have been of any extraordinary capacity. The coasting ships, indeed, still find a tolerably good shelter from the northern winds under the southern shore, but are obliged immediately to retire, when the winds change to the west or south; so that there must have been some better station than this for their security and reception. In the N.N.E. part likewise of the city, we see the traces of a safe and commodious basin, lying within the walls; but which at the same time is very small, scarce forty yards in diameter. Neither could it ever have enjoyed a larger area, unless the buildings which now circumscribe it were encroachments upon its original dimensions. Yet even this port, small as it is at present, is notwithstanding so choked up with sand and rubbish, that the boats of those poor fishermen, who now and then visit this once renowned emporium, can with great difficulty only be admitted."[3]

"This city," says Maundrell, who travelled nearly about the same time, "standing in the sea upon a peninsula, promises at a distance something very magnificent. But when you come to it, you find no similitude of that glory for which it was so renowned in ancient times, and which the prophet Ezekiel describes, chap. xxvi. xxvii. xxviii. On the north side it has an old Turkish ungarrisoned castle; besides which you see nothing here, but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, &c. there being not so much as one entire house left: its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harbouring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly upon fishing, who seem to be preserved in this place by Divine Providence, as a visible argument how God has fulfilled his word concerning Tyre, viz. that *it should be as the top of a rock, a place for fishers to dry their nets on.*"[4]

"Of this once powerful mistress of the ocean," says a recent traveller, "there now exist scarcely any traces. Some miserable cabins, ranged in irregular lines, dignified with the name of streets, and a few buildings of a rather better description, occupied by the officers of government, compose nearly the whole of the town. It still makes, indeed, some languishing efforts at commerce, and contrives to export annually to Alexandria cargoes of silk and tobacco, but the amount merits no consideration. '*The noble dust of Alexander, traced by the imagination till found stopping a beer-barrel,*' would scarcely afford a stronger contrast of grandeur and debasement than Tyre, at the period of being besieged by that conqueror, and the modern town of Tsour erected on its ashes."[5]

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[1] Savage's Abridgment, vol. i. p. 95. Pococke's Description of the East, vol. ii. book i. chap. 23. p. 83.

[2] Bp. Newton on the Prophecies, vol. i. p. 198. edit. 1793.

[3] Shaw's Travels, vol. ii. pp. 30, 31. 3d edit.

[4] Maundrell's Travels, p. 48.

[5] Jolliffe's Letters from Palestine, p. 13. 1820. 8vo. See also the articles Tyre and Sidon in the Historical, &c. Dictionary, Vol. III. *infrà.*

2. EGYPT was one of the most ancient and powerful kingdoms in former ages; and at one period is *said* to have contained eighteen thousand cities and seventeen millions of inhabitants. The revolutions and state of this kingdom were minutely described by the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.[1] The last-mentioned prophet, among other most striking denunciations, expressly says, that *Egypt shall be the basest of kingdoms, neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations. I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia. The pride of her power shall come down: from the tower of Syene, shall they fall in it by the sword. And I will make the rivers dry, and sell the land into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers. I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their idols to cease out of Noph* (or Memphis). (Ezek. xxix. 15. 10., xxx. 6. 12, 13.)

It is now upwards of two thousand four hundred years since this prophecy was delivered; and what likelihood or appearance was there, that so great a kingdom, so rich and fertile a country, should for so many ages bow under a foreign yoke, and never during that long period be able to recover its liberties, and have a prince of its own to reign over them? But as is the prophecy, so is the event. For, not long afterwards, Egypt was successively attacked and conquered by the Babylonians and Persians. On the subversion of the Persian empire by Alexander, it became subject to the Macedonians, then to the Romans, and after them to the Saracens, then to the Mamelukes, and is now a province of the Turkish empire; and the general character of its inhabitants is a compound of baseness, treachery, covetousness, and malice.[2] Syene is in ruins; and the idols of Egypt are scattered. And all modern travellers attest that the numerous canals with which this country was anciently intersected are (with the exception of a few in Lower Egypt) now neglected. The consequence is, that a very large proportion of the country is abandoned to sand and to unfruitfulness, while the effect is a fulfilment of the threatening, *I will make her rivers dry.* The annual supply of enriching and fertilising water being now lost to an immense tract of country on both sides of the Nile, sand, the natural soil, prevails: vegetation, which once bound together the earth by the roots and fibres of grass, is burnt up. What was once a fruitful field has become desolate, overwhelmed by flying blasts of sand, and consigned to ages of solitude[3]; and scarcely a broken column remains, to tell where Noph (or Memphis) stood. *Noph is waste, and desolate without an inhabitant.*

3. ETHIOPIA was a very considerable kingdom of Africa, bordering upon Egypt. Its doom was denounced by the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel[4]; and Nahum, *after* its accomplishment, declares what that doom was:—*Art thou better,* says he to Nineveh, *than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea? Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite; Put and Lubim were thy helpers. Yet was she carried away, she went into captivity; her young children also were dashed in pieces at the top of all the streets: and they cast lots for her honourable men.* (Nah. iii. 8—10.)

[1] See Isa. xix., Jer. xliii. 8—13. and xlvi., and Ezek. chapters xxix.—xxxii.

[2] The prophecies concerning Egypt are minutely considered and illustrated by Bishop Newton in his twelfth Dissertation, and by Dr. Keith in his Evidence, &c. from Prophecy, chapter xiii.

[3] Jowett's Christian Researches, p. 164.

[4] See Isa. xviii. 1—6., xx. 3—5., xliii. 3.; Ezek. xxx. 4—6.

Ethiopia was invaded and most cruelly ravaged by Sennacherib king of Assyria, or Esarhaddon his son, and also by Cambyses king of Persia. About the time of our Saviour's birth, the Romans ravaged part of this country; and since the subversion of their empire, it has been ravaged successively by the Saracens, Turks, and Giagas.

4. NINEVEH was the metropolis of the Assyrian empire, *an exceeding great city*, according to the prophet Jonah (iii. 3.), whose statement is confirmed by profane historians, *of three days' journey* in circuit, and containing a population of more than six hundred thousand inhabitants. Though the Ninevites repented at the preaching of Jonah, yet that repentance was of no long continuance: for soon after, Nahum predicted not only the total destruction of that city, which was accomplished one hundred and fifteen years afterwards, but also the manner in which it was to be effected. *While they were folden together as thorns, they were devoured as the stubble full dry.* (i. 10.)

The Medians, under the command of Arbaces, being informed of the negligence and drunkenness that prevailed in their camp, assaulted them by night, and drove such of the soldiers as survived the defeat into the city. *The gates of the river shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved;* which, Diodorus Siculus informs us, was literally fulfilled. And its utter destruction, foretold by Nahum (i. 8, 9., ii. 8—13., iii. 17—19.), and Zephaniah (ii. 13—15.), was so entirely accomplished, that no vestiges whatever have remained of it, and such an *utter end* was made of it, that for many centuries the place where Nineveh stood could scarcely be traced, until the researches of Mr. Layard discovered and laid open its splendid remains, and thus furnished additional proof of the truth of the divine predictions.[1]

5. Concerning BABYLON, it was foretold that it *should be shut up by the Medes, Elamites,* and other nations (Isa. xiii. 4., Jer. li. 7.); that *the river* Euphrates *should be dried up* (Isa. xliv. 27.; Jer. l. 38., li. 36.); and that the *city should be taken by surprise during the time of a feast, when all her rulers and mighty men were drunken.* (Jer. l. 24., li. 39. 57.)

All which was accomplished when Belshazzar and his thousand princes, who were drunk with him at a great feast, were slain by Cyrus's soldiers (men of various nations) after Cyrus had turned the course of the Euphrates, which ran through the midst of Babylon, and so drained its waters, that the river became easily fordable for his soldiers to enter the city. Further, it was particularly foretold, that *God would make the country a possession for the* BITTERN[2], *and pools of water* (Isa. xiv. 23.); which was accordingly fulfilled, by the country being overflowed, and becoming boggy and marshy, in consequence of the Euphrates being turned out of its course in order to take the city, and never restored to its former

[1] See Layard's Nineveh and its Remains (London, 1849, 2 vols. 8vo.); and his Discoveries in Nineveh and Babylon. (London, 1853. 8vo.) Readers who may not have access to these elaborate volumes, may advantageously read Mr. Layard's popular account of Nineveh (London, 1853. 8vo.), or Mr. Bonomi's Nineveh and its Palaces. The Discoveries of Botta and Layard applied to the Elucidation of Holy Writ. (London, 1853. 8vo.) Bp. Newton, vol. i. Diss. ix. Keith, Evidence, &c. from Prophecy, chapter x.

[2] The Hon. Capt. Keppel, who visited the ruins of Babylon in the year 1824, thus describes the scene:—"As far as the eye could reach, the horizon presented a broken line of mounds: the whole of this place was a desert flat; the only vegetation was a small prickly shrub thinly scattered over the plain, and some patches of grass, where the water had lodged in pools, occupied by immense flocks of BITTERNS: so literally has the prophecy of Isaiah been fulfilled respecting devoted Babylon, that it should be 'swept with the besom of destruction,' that it should be made 'a possession for the *bittern*, and pools of water.'" Narrative of a Journey from India to England, vol. i. p. 125. (London, 1827. 8vo.) But the best and most recent account of the ruins of Babylon will be found in Mr. Layard's Discoveries in Nineveh and Babylon, above cited.

channel. Could the correspondence of these events with the predictions be the result of chance? But suppose these predictions were forged after the event, can the following also have been written after the event, or with any reason be ascribed to chance?

The wild beasts of the desert shall dwell there,—and the owls shall dwell therein; and it shall be no more inhabited for ever, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbouring cities thereof, — so shall no man dwell there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein. They shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the Lord.—Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment and an hissing, without an inhabitant.—Babylon shall sink and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her. Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, — and dragons in their pleasant places.[1]

It is astonishing with what exactness these various predictions have been accomplished. After the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, it ceased to be a metropolis. It was afterwards dispeopled by the erection of the new cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon (B.C. 293), which were built with this design in its neighbourhood, and which completed its ruin and desolation — a desolation that continues to this day.[2]

6. Very important and specific are the predictions concerning THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES, in Jer. xlvii. 4—7., Ezek. xxv. 15—17., Amos i. 6—8., Zeph. ii. 4—7., and Zech. ix. 5—8. The following passages are selected on account of the striking evidence of their fulfilment involuntarily given by the acute sceptical traveller, Count Volney. *The remnants of the Philistines shall perish.* (Amos. i. 8.) *Woe unto the sea-coast, the nation of the Cherethites! the word of the* LORD *is against you; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant. And the sea-coast shall be dwellings, cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.* (Zeph. ii. 5, 6.) Describing the plain between Ramla and Gaza, the very plain of the Philistines along the sea-coast, Volney says: —

"We met with a number of villages badly built of dried mud, and which, like the inhabitants, exhibit every mark of poverty and wretchedness. The houses, on a near view, are only so many huts, sometimes detached, at others ranged in the form of cells around a court-yard, inclosed by a mud wall. In winter they and their cattle may be said to live together; the part of the dwelling allotted to themselves being raised only two feet above that in which they lodge their beasts. Except the environs of these villages all the rest of the country is a desert, and abandoned to the Bedouin Arabs, who feed their flocks on it."[3] So literally has *the remnant of the Philistines* perished; *and the sea-coast* has become *cattages for shepherds and folds for flocks.*

7. Daniel predicted the fate of the FOUR GREAT MONARCHIES, viz. the subversion of the Babylonian empire by the Medo-Persians, and of the Persian empire by the Grecians under Alexander the Great; the division of his empire into four parts, which accordingly took place after the death of Alexander; and the rise of the Romans, who were to reduce all other kingdoms under their dominion, and

[1] Jer. l. 39, 40., li. 26. 37. 64.; Isa. xiii. 19—22.

[2] Bp. Newton, vol. i. Diss. x. See also Kett's History the Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. i. pp. 123. *et seq.*

[3] Volney's Travels in Syria [towards the close of the eighteenth century], vol. ii. 335, 336. A copious illustration of the fulfilment of prophecy respecting the land of the Philistines is given by Dr. Keith, Evidence, &c. from Prophecy chap. ix.

form one vast empire, that was to be different from all former kingdoms.

The Romans *did* arise, and reduce all other kingdoms under their dominion; and did actually form one vast republic, which was different from all other governments that had preceded it.[1] The prophecies of Daniel, and his history of the four monarchies, are so exactly parallel, that the celebrated infidel Porphyry, in the second century, could only evade the force of them by asserting, contrary to all evidence, that they were written long after the events; which is as absurd as if any one should maintain that the works of Virgil were not written under Augustus, but after his time; for the book of Daniel was as public, as widely dispersed, and as universally received, as any book could ever possibly be.

Here let us pause, and consider the series of predictions exhibited in the preceding pages, which indeed form only a small part in comparison of those which might have been adduced. Let the reader carefully and impartially survey them, and contrast them with their respective accomplishments; and let him then say, whether the prophecies do not contain information *more than human?* Not to dwell on general prophecies, let him select the five first of those contained in this second class, and compare and meditate fully on these five predictions. "The priority of the records to the events admits of no question; the completion is obvious to every inquirer. Here then are five facts. We are called upon to account for those facts upon rational and adequate principles. Is human foresight equal to the chance? Enthusiasm? Conjecture? Chance? Political contrivance? If none of these—neither any other principle that may be devised by man's sagacity—can account for the facts; then true philosophy, as well as true religion, will ascribe them to the inspiration of the Almighty. Every effect must have a cause. But if God is the author of these predictions, then the book which contains them is stamped with the seal of heaven: a rich vein of evidence runs through the volume of the Old Testament; the Bible *is* true; infidelity is confounded for ever; and we may address its patrons in the language of Saint Paul,—*Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish!*"[2]

Class III.

Prophecies directly announcing the Messiah.

If we turn from the prophecies respecting the circumstances of individuals, as well as the empires and kingdoms of the world in ancient times, to those predictions in which we ourselves are more immediately concerned, we shall find that they are not less remarkable, and astonishingly minute.

The great object of the prophecies of the Old Testament is the redemption of mankind. This, as soon as Adam's fall had made it necessary, the mercy of God was pleased to foretell. And, as the time for its accomplishment drew near, the predictions concerning it gra-

[1] Dan. ii. 39, 40., vii. 17—24., viii. and ix. Bp. Newton, 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th Dissertations, and Brown's Harmony of Scripture Prophecy, chapters xii.—xiv. pp. 141—174. Edinburgh, 1800. [Hooke's] Religionis Naturalis et Revelatæ Principia, tom. ii. pp. 142—158.

[2] A Key to the Prophecies, by the Rev. David Simpson, p. 76.

dually became so clear, that almost every circumstance in the life and character of the most extraordinary personage that ever appeared among men was most distinctly foretold. The connection of the predictions belonging to the Messiah, with those which are confined to the Jewish people, gives additional force to the argument from prophecy; affording a strong proof of the intimate union which subsists between the two dispensations of Moses and of Jesus Christ, and equally precluding the artful pretensions of human imposture, and the daring opposition of human power. The plan of prophecy was so wisely constituted, that the passions and prejudices of the Jews, instead of frustrating, fulfilled it; and rendered the person, to whom they referred, the suffering and crucified Saviour who had been promised. It is worthy of remark, that most of these predictions were delivered nearly, and some of them more than, three thousand years ago. Any one of them is sufficient to indicate a prescience more than human: but the collective force of all taken together is such, that nothing more can be necessary to prove the interposition of omniscience, than the establishment of their authenticity; and this, even at so remote a period as the present, we have already seen, is placed beyond all doubt. For the books, in which they are contained, are known to have been written at the time to which, and by the persons to whom, they are respectively assigned, and also to have been translated into different languages, and dispersed into different parts, long *before* the coming of Jesus Christ. It is absurd, therefore, to suppose that any forgery with respect to them, if attempted by the first Christians, should not have been immediately detected: and still more absurd, if possible, to suppose that any passages thus forged should *afterwards* have been admitted universally into their scriptures by the Jews themselves; who, from the first application of these predictions to Jesus Christ, have endeavoured by every method to pervert their meaning. Surely, if the prophecies in question had not been found at that time in the writings to which the first propagators of Christianity appealed, the Jews needed only to produce those writings, in order to refute the imposition: and since no refutation was *then* attempted, it was a demonstration to the men of that age; and the same prophecies, being found there *now*, without the possibility of accounting for it if they were forged, convey in all reason as forcible a demonstration to ourselves at present, that they were written there from the beginning, and, consequently, by divine inspiration.[1]

The prophecies which respect the Messiah are neither few in number, nor vague and equivocal in their reference; but numerous, pointed, and particular. They bear on them those discriminating marks, by which divine inspiration may be distinguished from the conjectures of human sagacity; and a necessary or probable event from a casual and uncertain contingency. They are such as cannot be referred to the dictates of mere natural penetration; because they are not confined to general occurrences, but point out with singular exactness a variety of minute circumstances relating to times, places,

[1] Dr. Eveleigh's Bampton Lectures for 1792, pp. 210, 211.

and persons which were neither objects of foresight nor conjecture, because they were not necessarily connected with the principal event, or even probable either in themselves or in their relation. They were such as could only have occurred to a mind that was under the immediate influence of the divinity, by which distant periods were revealed, and the secrets of unborn ages disclosed. The scheme of prophecy, considered in its first opening, its gradual advance, and its final and full completion in the advent, the ministry, the death, and resurrection of the Messiah, and the extensive progress of the Gospel among the Gentiles, together with its blessed influence on individuals, societies, countries, and the whole race of mankind, — is an object, the greatest and most sublime that imagination can conceive, and the most pleasing and important that the human mind can contemplate. *To Jesus give all the prophets witness;* and around him they throw the beams of their united light. In illustration of these remarks, we shall now select a *few* of the most striking predictions relative to the Messiah, and shall show their accomplishment in the person of Jesus Christ; referring the reader to the Appendix for a more copious series of prophecies, with their fulfilment in the very words of the writers of the New Testament.[1]

We behold the promise of a Redeemer given to our first parents, immediately after the fall, in obscure and general terms. (Gen. iii. 15.) It foretold a victory which would be gained over the enemy that had deceived and conquered them; a victory the most illustrious in its effects and consequences, and which should amply revenge on the serpent's head the evils and miseries which he had introduced into the world. Further, we behold the promise renewed in somewhat clearer language, to the patriarchs, particularly to Abraham, the great father of the faithful, and the precise line indicated from which the Messiah was to be descended; the fulfilment of which prophetic promise may be seen in the genealogies of Jesus Christ, taken from the public registers by Matthew and Luke.

The prophets have not only foretold, in general terms, a great revolution that would take place in the world by the coming of the Messiah; but they have delineated some particular circumstances attending it, which only the eye of omniscience could have foreseen. They have marked out the precise time and place of the Messiah's birth; they have described with wonderful exactness the distinguishing features of his office and character; they have displayed with equal beauty and truth the effects and consequences of his advent; and, through all their predictions, something pointing to the Messiah, either by direct application, or by secondary and distant reference, is so interwoven with the general contexture, the universal scheme of prophecy, that, by keeping it in our eye, we shall be furnished with a clue to trace out their ultimate design, and contemplate their mutual connection with, and dependence on, each other: for *the testimony of Jesus is,* clearly and eminently, *the spirit of prophecy.* This is its ruling and vital principle. Divested of this, it loses its spirit and its power. We behold no

[1] See the Appendix to this volume, No. VI. *infrà.*

consistency: the impression of its dignity is weakened; its object is debased; its end is darkened. But, viewed in this light, we behold in it a harmony which delights, a grandeur which astonishes, and from the result of the whole arises such evidence as carries conviction to the understanding.[1] More particularly,

1. The prophecies of the Old Testament distinctly announced that the MESSIAH WAS TO COME, when the government should be utterly lost from Judah. *The sceptre* (peculiar prerogative and dignity) *shall not depart from Judah till Shiloh come.* (Gen. xlix. 10.) This prediction all the ancient Jews applied to the Messiah.

The tribe of Judah is no longer a political body; it has no authority or magistrates of its own, but is dispersed and confounded among the other tribes of Jews; its present condition, therefore, is an evident mark that Shiloh, or the Messiah, is already come.

2. Daniel points out the precise TIME in which he was to come, to make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness.[2] He fixes the seventy weeks (of years, that is, four hundred and ninety years), on one side, at the edict of Artaxerxes, for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, which was accomplished by Nehemiah; and, on the other, at the death of the Messiah, and the establishment of his church. The two points of this duration are therefore known, and one determines the other: the term at which a revolution of four hundred and ninety years commences necessarily shows where it ends. The prophets Haggai and Malachi[3] foretold that the Messiah, *the desire of all nations whom they were seeking,* should come before the destruction of the second temple, and that his presence should fill it with a glory which the first temple had not, though it was far richer and more magnificent.

Jesus Christ preached in that temple, which was totally destroyed within forty years afterwards. This second temple has been destroyed upwards of seventeen centuries; whence it is manifest that more than seventeen centuries have elapsed since the Messiah came.

3. The PLACE where the Messiah was to be born,—viz. Bethlehem,—and the TRIBE from which he was to spring (that of Judah), were literally predicted by Micah.

Both these circumstances are recorded by the evangelists as fulfilled; the providence of God so ordering it, that Augustus should then command a general census to be taken, which caused Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem, not only that she might be delivered there, but that, their names being there entered, their family might be ascertained, and no doubt might afterwards arise as to their being of *the line of David.* All the evangelists have mentioned that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, and that this is an undoubted *fact* we are informed by Paul, when he asserts that *it is evident our Lord sprang out of Judah.*[4]

4. The prophet Isaiah has particularly foretold, that the Messiah should be BORN of a virgin (Isa. vii. 14.), and that he should descend from the family of David (ix. 6, 7., xi. 1, 2.), which was a particular branch of the tribe of Judah. While he points out his miraculous birth, and describes his descent, he pourtrays his character in colours

[1] Dr. White's Bampton Lectures, p. 291. 2d edit. [2] Dan. ix. 24—27.
[3] Haggai ii. 6—9.; Mal. iii. 1. [4] Micah v. 2.; Matt. ii. 1.; Heb vii. 14.

so striking and distinguishing, as to render its appropriation to Christ obvious to every one who compares the picture with the original. It was this holy prophet who foretold that the Messiah should be (liii. 1, 2, 3.) destitute of outward power or influence to attract the esteem and insure the attachment of the world; that though in the eye of God he should be (xxviii. 16.) *the chief corner stone,* elect, precious; yet that he should be (viii. 14, 15.) *a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence* to men who were guided by the springs which in general actuate the human breast, such as interest, ambition, and the love of sensual enjoyments: and particularly it was foretold, that the Jews *should fall on this rock;* should refuse to build on him as the only foundation of their hopes; but should, in their attempt to shake and overthrow it, be themselves scattered and broken to pieces. The same prophet declared that he should (vi. 9, 10, 11.) veil the eyes of the wise and learned, and preach the gospel to the poor and illiterate; that he should (xlii. 1. &c.) restore sight to the blind, health to the diseased, and light to those who had been oppressed with darkness; that he should teach the true and perfect way, and should be the great instructor of the Gentiles; that (lx. 10.) kings should fall down before him, and all nations pay him homage and obedience; that his reign should be gentle and benevolent; and that the influence of his gospel should harmonise the jarring (lv. 13.) passions of mankind, and, together with the knowledge and worship of the true God, establish peace and purity on the earth. (lvi. 6, 7, 8.)

5. In the fifty-third chapter, the prophet gives a most striking and affecting picture of the temper and behaviour of the Messiah amidst the most distressing and humiliating scenes through which he passed. His DEATH, considered as the great propitiation for the sins of the whole world, was an object of such vast importance, that it pleased the Divine Being strongly to mark the more distinguished circumstances of it in prophetic language; to the end that our faith in him might have every evidence to confirm it that was necessary to give satisfaction to modest and impartial inquirers.

The fact in every respect corresponded with the prediction; and so far was the prophet introduced into the secret counsels of the divine mind, that when he spoke of future events, he appears to be relating their past history: for to that omniscient God, whose light directed the prophet's eye through the darkest recesses of distant ages, prescience and accomplishment are the same; and the future and the past form but one object. Hence the most striking scenes of Christ's passion are delineated by the prophetic pencil with the same truth and exactness as if they had been drawn on the spot when the sacred volume of the divine decrees was unrolled, and when that which had been foreseen in vision was exhibited in reality.[1]

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[1] Compare Mark xv. 27, 28.—White's Bampton Lectures, pp. 291—294. So striking is the prediction of Isaiah above referred to, and with such precision has it been fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, that the modern opposers of revelation are obliged to have recourse to the most absurd and contradictory assertions in order to evade the forcible argument which it affords to the truth of the Scriptures. Thus some have affirmed, that the prophecy in question was composed *after* the commencement of the Christian æra. Not to repeat the evidence already adduced (see pp. 40—45. *suprà*) for the genuineness of Isaiah's writings, as a component part of the Old Testament, we may remark that this assertion is completely refuted by the *fact* of his prophecy being extant in the Septuagint Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures, which was executed *only* 282 years BEFORE the Christian æra. Other opposers of revelation assert that Jeremiah is the person to whom the prophet

In addition to these prophecies of Isaiah, we may remark, that long before his time David foretold the change of the order of the priesthood by the Messiah, — the office he should sustain, — the sufferings which he should undergo, — and the glorious triumphs he should enjoy from his resurrection, his ascension, and the extensive propagation of his gospel.[1]

6. The Messiah was NOT to lie in the grave and see corruption[2], but was to be raised from the dead on the third day after his interment[3], and to ascend into heaven, there to reign at his Father's right hand, invested with universal dominion.[4]

How exactly all these things were accomplished in the person of Christ is obvious to every one that carefully compares these predictions with their fulfilment.

7. Lastly, it was foretold that the Messiah should ABOLISH THE OLD, and introduce a NEW COVENANT or dispensation with his people; and accordingly, Jesus Christ brought in a more perfect and rational economy.[5]

The old covenant is abolished, and its observance rendered impossible by the expulsion of the Jews from Judæa and Jerusalem, and the destruction by fire of that temple and altar on which the whole of the Jewish public worship depended. It is, therefore, as impossible to doubt that the Mediator of the new covenant is come, as to question those external *facts* which prove that the ancient covenant subsists no longer.

The manner in which the evangelical historians showed the fulfilment of the prophecies by Christ is remarkable, for they did not apply

referred. This opinion was first asserted by the Jewish rabbi Saadiah Gaon (in Aben Ezra's commentary on Isaiah), and was adopted by Grotius, from whom it has been copied by Collins, Paine, and other infidel writers. But the characters given of the person, who is the subject of this prophecy, by no means agree with Jeremiah. For this person is represented as one without guilt, entirely free from sin, and who had never gone astray like other men; as one who was to suffer for the sins of others, which sufferings he was to bear with the utmost patience,—nay, he was even to make intercession for those transgressors who were the cause of his sufferings; and though he was to be *cut off*, or die, yet he was to live again, have a large number of disciples and followers, and be highly exalted and dignified. Now not one of these characters is applicable to Jeremiah, who was subject to the *same* sinful infirmities as other men are; he was *not* wounded or bruised, nor did he die for the sins of his people; and the sufferings which he underwent on their account he was so far from bearing with patience, that he even *cursed the day wherein he was born* (Jer. xx. 14.) on account of them; and prayed that he might *see the vengeance* of God upon his countrymen (xx. 12.), and that God would *pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter*. (xii. 3.) Further, Jeremiah had not a large number of disciples, neither was he exalted and extolled as the person described by Isaiah is said to be. But all and every part of this prophecy exactly agrees with the Messiah, Jesus, whose first appearance was mean and abject; on which account he was despised by men, from whom he suffered many things with inexpressible patience, and at last endured an ignominious death, which was an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of the world: and being raised from the dead, he is now exalted high, on his Father's right hand, where he ever lives to make intercession for transgressors; and has ever since had a large number of disciples, who have embraced his doctrines and espoused his cause,—a *seed* which has served him and will continue to serve him until time shall be no more. For an account of other evasions, to which the modern Jaws have recourse in order to elude the force of Isaiah's prophecy, see Bp. Pearson on the Creed, pp. 183, 184. folio. 10th edit.; also Paley's Evidences, vol. ii. pp. 1—11., and [Hooke's] Religionis Naturalis et Revelatæ Principia, tom. ii. pp. 431—443.

[1] Psal. ii. 6. &c., xxii. cx.
[2] Compare Psal. xvi. 10. with Matt. xxviii. 6.
[3] Compare Hos. vi. 2. with Matt. xx. 19., xxviii. 1—7., and 1 Cor. xv. 4.
[4] Compare Psal. xvi. 11., lxviii. 18., and Isa. ix. 7.; Luke xxiv. 50, 51., Acts i. 9, and Matt. xxviii. 18.
[5] Compare Jer. xxxi. 31—34. with Heb. viii. 6—13.

them with hesitation, as if they were doubtful concerning their sense, or undecided as to their object. Their boldness of assertion bore the stamp and character of truth. They had the clearest proofs, more particularly from miracles, that their master was the promised Messiah, and therefore were fully persuaded that all the prophecies centred in him. They appear to have had no conception that this evidence could, in the nature of things, be referable to any one else; and therefore they pressed the arguments drawn from the Old Testament upon the minds of the unconverted with all the sincerity of conviction and all the authority of truth.[1]

The preceding is a *concise* view of the predictions contained in the Old Testament, concerning the advent, life, doctrine, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. Such a variety of circumstances, therefore, predicted concerning one person so many years before he was born, and of such an extraordinary nature, — all accomplished in Christ, and in no other person that ever appeared in the world, — point him out with irresistible evidence as the Messiah, the Saviour of mankind. If only *one* single man had left a book of predictions concerning Jesus Christ, and had distinctly and precisely marked out the time, place, manner, and other circumstances of his advent, life, doctrine, death, resurrection, and ascension; — a prophecy, or series of prophecies, so astonishing, so circumstanced, so connected, would be the most wonderful thing in the world, and would have infinite weight. But the miracle is far greater: for, here is a succession of men, for four thousand years, who were widely separated from each other by time and place, yet who regularly, and without any variation, succeeded one another to foretell the same event. Here, therefore, the hand of God is manifest; and Jesus Christ is evidenced to be the Messiah. Since the beginning of the world, all the prophecies have been present to his mind: he has taken from them all that seemed contradictory, when not considered in respect to him; he has equally accomplished them, whether the thing they predicted concerning him were humiliating or divine; and has demonstrated that he is the centre and end of them all, by reducing them to unity in his own person.

Further, by the accomplishment of the prophecies, which is the particular and incommunicable character of Jesus Christ, all seducers or pretended messiahs, whether past or future, are convicted of imposture. A few considerations will fully prove this point.

There is but one deliverer promised, and to one only do the Scriptures bear testimony. Whoever, therefore, has neither been promised nor foretold, can be nothing but an impostor; and whoever cannot ascend as high as the first promise, or grounds himself upon Scriptures less ancient than those of the Jews, stands convicted of imposture by that circumstance alone, either because he has *no* title, or has only a *false* one.

All the prophets foretell what the Messiah is to do and suffer: there

[1] Kett on Prophecy, vol. i. p. 186.

can, therefore, be no doubt between him who has done and suffered what the prophets foretold, and him who has had *no knowledge* of their predictions, or has *not* fulfilled them.

Among the predictions of the prophets there are some that cannot be repeated, and which are so annexed to certain times and places, that they cannot be imitated by a *false* Messiah. It was necessary, for instance, that the *true* Messiah should come into the world before the destruction of the second temple, because he was to teach there. It was necessary that he should lay the foundations of the church in Jerusalem, because from Mount Sion it was to be diffused over the whole world. It was necessary that the Jews should reject him before their dispersion, because it was to be the punishment of their wilful blindness. Finally, it was necessary that the conversion of the Gentiles should be his work or that of his disciples, since it is by this visible mark that the prophets point him out.

Now the temple is no more; Jerusalem is possessed by strangers; the Jews are dispersed, and the Gentiles are converted. It is clear, therefore, that the Messiah is come; but it is not less manifest that no one else can repeat the proofs which he has given of his coming; and, consequently, *no one else can accomplish what the prophets foretold would be fulfilled by the Messiah.*

Bishop Hurd's fine view of prophecy will terminate this class of the Old Testament predictions with great propriety and force. "If," says that very learned and elegant writer, "we look into those writings, we find,—

1. "That prophecy is of a prodigious extent; that it commenced from the fall of man, and reaches to the consummation of all things: that for many ages it was delivered darkly, to few persons, and with large intervals from the date of one prophecy to that of another; but, at length, became more clear, more frequent, and was uniformly carried on in the line of one people, separated from the rest of the world, among other reasons assigned, for this principally, to be the repository of the divine oracles; that, with some intermission, the spirit of prophecy subsisted among that people, to the coming of Christ; that he himself and his apostles exercised this power in the most conspicuous manner; and left behind them many predictions, recorded in the books of the New Testament, which profess to respect very distant events, and even run out to the end of time, or, in St. John's expression, to that period, *when the mystery of God shall be perfected.* (Rev. x. 7.)

2. "Further, besides the extent of this prophetic scheme, the dignity of the *person* whom it concerns deserves our consideration. He is described in terms which excite the most august and magnificent ideas. He is spoken of, indeed, sometimes as being *the seed of the woman,* and as *the son of man;* yet so as being at the same time of more than mortal extraction. He is even represented to us, as being superior to men and angels; as far above all principality and power, above all that is accounted great, whether in heaven or in earth; as the word and wisdom of God; as the eternal Son of the Father; as the heir of all things, by whom he made the world; as the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person. We have no words

to denote greater ideas than these: the mind of man cannot elevate itself to nobler conceptions. Of such transcendant worth and excellence is that Jesus said to be, to whom all the prophets bear witness.

3. "Lastly, the declared *purpose*, for which the Messiah, prefigured by so long a train of prophecy, came into the world, corresponds to all the rest of the representation. It was not to deliver an oppressed nation from civil tyranny, or to erect a great civil empire, that is, to achieve one of those acts which history accounts most heroic. No: it was not a mighty state, a *victor people* —

"'*Non res Romanæ perituraque regna* —'

that was worthy to enter into the contemplation of this divine person. It was another and far sublimer purpose, which He came to accomplish: a purpose, in comparison of which, all our policies are poor and little, and all the performances of man as nothing. It was to deliver a world from ruin; to abolish sin and death; to purify and immortalise human nature: and thus, in the most exalted sense of the words, to be the Saviour of all men, and the blessing of all nations.

"There is no exaggeration in this account. I deliver the undoubted sense, if not always the very words, of Scripture.

"Consider then to what this representation amounts. Let us unite the several parts of it and bring them to a point. A spirit of prophecy pervading all time; characterising one person, of the highest dignity; and proclaiming the accomplishment of one purpose, the most beneficent, the most divine, that imagination itself can project. — Such is the scriptural delineation, whether we will receive it or no, of that economy, which we call prophetic!"[1]

Class IV.

Prophecies delivered by Jesus Christ and his apostles.

The predictions delivered by Jesus Christ and his apostles, and which are recorded in the books of the New Testament, are not less evidently the inspiration of omniscience than those contained in the Old Testament.

The prophecies of Christ, indeed, were such as gave additional evidence to his divine character, and clearly proved him to be filled with a spirit more than human. He uttered numerous predictions of events, altogether improbable on the ground of present appearances, and such as the most penetrating mind could never have foreseen, nor conjectured, much less have described with all their peculiarities, and marked out the several incidents that attended them. Thus, Jesus Christ foretold his own death and resurrection with an enumeration of many circumstances attending them, — the descent of the Holy Spirit, — the astonishing (and to all human views improbable) fate of the temple of Jerusalem, and the total destruction of the city, — and the universal spread of his gospel, together with its extraordinary

[1] Bp. Hurd's Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies, Serm. ii. (Works, vol. v. pp. 35—37.)

and glorious triumph over the power and policy of the world, notwithstanding all the violent opposition to which it would be exposed.[1]

1. Jesus Christ foretold his own DEATH several times, with an enumeration of many of the circumstances that were to attend it.

In Matt. xvi. 21. he told his disciples *that he must go to Jerusalem, and there suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed.* In Mark x. 33, 34. and Matt. xx. 18, 19. he foretells, more particularly, the manner in which they would proceed against him, viz. that *the chief priests and scribes would condemn him to death*, but that they would not put him to death, but *deliver him to the Gentiles, to mock, and scourge, and crucify him*, which was afterwards done by Pilate, the Roman governor. He likewise predicted in what manner this was to be accomplished, as, that he would be *betrayed into the hands of men, and by the man who dipped his hands with him in the dish, and that all his disciples would forsake him.* (Matt. xx. 18., xxvi. 23. 31.) And when Peter declared his resolution to adhere to him, Christ foretold that the apostle would deny him, with very particular circumstances of the time and manner of his denial. *This night before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice* (Mark xiv. 30.); all which was punctually accomplished.

2. Jesus Christ also distinctly predicted his RESURRECTION, with its circumstances; viz. that *he should rise again the third day* (Matt. xvi. 21.), and that *after he was risen he would go before them into Galilee* (Matt. xxvi. 32.), which was fulfilled. (Matt. xxviii. 16.)

3. He likewise foretold the DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT on the apostles, in miraculous powers and gifts, and specifies the place where the Holy Spirit should descend.

Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high. (Luke xxiv. 49.) And he particularly declares what the effects of such descent should be: — *And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils, and they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.* (Mark xvi. 17, 18.) All which was punctually fulfilled in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and in the following part of that history.

4. The next instance of Christ's prophetic spirit is, his FORETELLING THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM, and of its celebrated temple, with all its preceding signs, and concomitant and subsequent circumstances. He not only predicted the period when this awful event should take place, but described the very ensigns of those arms which were to effect the direful catastrophe; and also foretold the various calamities that should befall the Jewish nation, and the total ruin in which their ecclesiastical and civil policy should be involved: and the very generation that heard the prediction lived to be the miserable witnesses of its fulfilment.[2] Of the prophecies, indeed, that respect the Jews (and which are common to the New as well as to the Old Testament), some have long since been accomplished; others are every day receiving their accomplishment before our eyes, and all of them abundantly prove the divine origin of the Gospel prophecy. The destruction of Jerusalem, with its unparalleled circumstances of horror, is not more clearly recorded by Josephus[3], than it is foretold

[1] On the predictions of Jesus Christ, see the Appendix to this volume, No. VI. *infrà.*

[2] See the particulars of this prophecy, with the historical evidence of its fulfilment, *infrà*, in the Appendix, No. VI., Chapter II.

[3] The sixth and seventh books of Josephus's History of the Jewish War with the Romans

by Daniel, and by Jesus Christ. Nor did the latter prophesy only, in the most definite language, the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. xvi. 28.), and particularly that not one stone of the temple (Mark xiii. 2.) should be left upon another; he also expressly foretold that Jerusalem, thus destroyed, should be trodden under foot by the Gentiles, till the time of the Gentiles should be fulfilled; while the Jews were to be carried away captive into all lands: and, according to the denunciation of their great lawgiver (Deut. xxviii. 37.), were to become an astonishment and a by-word.

Jerusalem WAS taken by the Romans, and the temple was levelled to the ground. Whatever the distinguished affection of the Jews for their religion and country could suggest, and whatever infidelity and hatred of Christianity could help forward in their favour, was tried in vain, with the malignant view of confronting and defeating these prophecies. The apostate Julian, — an emperor qualified for the attempt by his riches, power, and persevering hostility to the name of Christ, — collected the Jews from all countries, and led them on, under his favourite Alypius, to rebuild their temple. Every human power co-operated with them, and every difficulty appeared to have vanished: when, on a sudden, the work was broken up with terror and precipitation; and an enterprise, of which the execution was so zealously desired and so powerfully supported, was at once deserted. As the influence of human means was entirely engaged in its favour, the miscarriage of it must be ascribed to supernatural interposition. What this was, we are informed by contemporary and other writers, and particularly by Ammianus Marcellinus; whose testimony as a pagan, a philosopher, and a bosom friend of the apostate prince, infidelity would fully and readily admit, were it not beforehand apprised of its contents. He declares, that "horrible balls of fire, breaking out near the foundation, with frequent and reiterated attacks, rendered the place from time to time inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen; and, that the victorious element continuing in this manner obstinately bent, as it were, to repel their attempts, the enterprise was abandoned."[1] So satisfactory and decisive is this evidence of the impartial heathen writer, that the historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, although he attempts, with stubborn scepticism, to invalidate some of its proofs, and insinuates a want of impartial authorities, is compelled not only to acknowledge the general fact, but many of the particular circumstances by which it was accompanied and distinguished.[2]

How literally the latter part of the above-noticed prediction, relative to the dispersion and degradation of the Jews, has been fulfilled, from the days of Titus and Hadrian to the *present* time, every historian informs us: that it is so *now*, we have the evidence of our own senses and personal knowledge. The nations that once shook the world with their arms have, in their turns, disappeared, and mingled again with the common mass of mankind: but the Jews, though exiles in every country under heaven, and in every country oppressed, hated, and despised, have yet, by a peculiar fate, of which the world affords no second instance, survived for more than seventeen centuries the loss of their country and the dissolution of their government, have preserved their name and language, their customs and religion, in every climate of the globe; and, though themselves not a people, have yet subsisted a separate and distinct race in the midst of every other nation. Having totally lost the *sceptre*, and having no *lawgiver* independently of a foreign tribunal, they afford a standing proof that *the Shiloh* IS COME, *to whom the gathering of the people should be;* and thus exhibit a wonderful example of the truth of *their own* prophetic Scriptures, and in consequence a continual and increasing evidence of the divine authority of *ours*.

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contain a detailed narrative of the events which were predicted by Jesus Christ in a *few words*.

[1] Ammian. Marcell. Hist. lib. xxiii. c. i. tom. i. p. 332. edit. Bipont.

[2] Decline and Fall, vol. iv. p. 108. Bp. Warburton has fully examined, and vindicated, the history of the event above noticed, in his treatise, entitled "Julian; or, a Discourse concerning the Earthquake and fiery Eruption, which defeated that Emperor's Attempt to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem," in the eighth volume of the 8vo. edition of his works.

5. Further, Jesus Christ foretold that he should have a CHURCH AND PEOPLE, not only by express prophecies, but also by monuments or ordinances of perpetual observance, instituted by him for his church, and which, as we have already seen[1], subsist to the present day. He commanded his apostles to go and teach all nations; and accordingly *they went forth*, after his ascension, and *preached the Gospel every where*, with great success, *the Lord working with them, and confirming the words with signs* or miracles *following*.

Both sacred and profane historians bear testimony to the rapid propagation of the Gospel, after the death of its Author. In a few days after the ascension, there were at Jerusalem about *one hundred and twenty* disciples (Acts i. 15.): on the day of Pentecost, which was ten days afterwards, there were added to them about THREE THOUSAND SOULS (ii. 41.); and soon after the number of the men was about *five thousand* (iv. 4.): after this we are told that *multitudes of believers, both men and women, were added to the Lord;* that the number of the *disciples were multiplied in Jerusalem greatly*, and *that a great company of priests were obedient to the faith.* (v. and vi.) This rapid diffusion of Christianity among the Jews was accomplished within the short space of two years after the ascension. In the course of the seven following years, the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles in Cæsarea; and, a year after this, a great number of them was converted at Antioch. The words of the historian are:— A GREAT NUMBER *believed and turned to the Lord;* — MUCH PEOPLE *was added to the Lord;* — and, *the apostles Barnabas and Saul taught* MUCH PEOPLE. (xi. 21. 24. 26.) On the death of Herod (which happened next year), *the word of God* GREW *and* MULTIPLIED (xii. 24.); and, in the three following years, when Paul preached at Iconium, *a* GREAT MULTITUDE *both of Jews and also of the Greeks believed* (xiv. 1.); and he afterwards *taught* MANY at Derbe, a city of Lycaonia. (21.) In three years after this, or in sixteen years after the ascension, Paul found the Gentile converts of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, *established in the faith, and* INCREASING IN NUMBER daily. (xvi. 5.) In Thessalonica, *some* of the Jews *believed, and of the devout Greeks a* GREAT MULTITUDE, *and of the chief women* NOT A FEW. (xvii. 4.) At Berea MANY of the Jews *believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men* NOT A FEW (12.): at Corinth, MANY *hearing, believed and were baptized* (xviii. 8.); and the remark of the historian Luke — *so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed* (xix. 20.) — proves the success of Paul's preaching at Ephesus; as also does the complaint of Demetrius, that *throughout all Asia this Paul hath persuaded and turned away* MUCH PEOPLE. (26.) At Athens *certain men clave unto him, and believed.* (xvii. 34.)

What the evangelical historian here relates is further confirmed by history to be plain and undoubted matter of fact: for the apostle Paul wrote epistles *to all the saints at Rome, to the churches at Corinth, in Galatia, at Ephesus, Colossæ, and Thessalonica, and to all the saints at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons;* which he neither would nor could have done, if there had not been a considerable number of Christians in all these places. Further, he stationed Timothy at Ephesus, and gave him directions for the government of the church there; and he *left Titus in Crete*, with a commission to *set in order the things that were wanting, and ordain elders in every city.* (Tit. i. 5.) Peter directs his epistle *to the elect, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.* (1 Pet. i. 1, 2.) In Paul's Epistle to the Colossians (i. 6. 23.) he represents the Gospel as then already preached *in all the world*, and *to every creature which is under heaven.* This was nearly thirty years after the ascension of Jesus Christ, or about the year 62 of the vulgar æra. We also learn from ecclesiastical history that, soon after the first preaching of the Gospel, churches were established, and bishops settled, in every part of the then known world; the names of many of whom are recorded. There were also Christian writers[2], many of whose works are still extant, in all parts of the world, as at

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[1] See pp. 137—139. *suprà.*

[2] "It may help to convey to us some notion of the extent and progress of Christianity, or rather of the character and quality of many early Christians, of their learning and their labours, to notice the number of Christian *writers* who flourished in these ages. Saint Jerome's catalogue contains *sixty-six* writers within the first three centuries, and the first

Antioch, Smyrna, Sardis, Edessa, Athens, Corinth, Alexandria, Carthage, Rome, and in Gaul; and who have already furnished us with striking testimonies to the genuineness and authenticity of the Christian Scriptures.

In considering the testimonies above cited from the historian Luke, it is worthy of remark, that his account is a very *incomplete* narrative of the propagation of Christianity; a very small part of it only being appropriated to the history of the twelve apostles, more particularly of Peter, and the remainder (forming about two thirds of the Acts of the Apostles) being occupied with the relation of Paul's conversion and apostolic labours: — not to mention that, in this history, large portions of time are passed over with a very slight notice. If, therefore, what we read in the Acts of the Apostles be true, much more than is contained in that history must be true also. We are, moreover, indebted for the information, which it presents to us respecting the spread of the Gospel, more to incident or occasion than to any design in the historian to magnify the number or rank of the converts. Thus, Luke is totally silent concerning some of the apostles, as well as the number of converts to the Christian name and faith, at Philippi, Galatia, and other places and countries; nor is it likely that we should have known any thing of the number in many places, had not incidents occurred, which made it necessary for the historian to mention them.[1]

Beside the intimations contained in the New Testament respecting the progress of Christianity, its wonderful and speedy propagation throughout the world is attested by the joint consent of contemporary pagan and of Christian writers.

Thus, the historian Tacitus, speaking of the persecutions by Nero, A. D. 65, says, that *this pestilent superstition* (so he terms the Christian religion) spread itself not only through Judæa, but even in the city of Rome, and that a *vast multitude* of Christians was seized and put to death by the emperor. Here then is a most in-

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six years of the fourth; and *fifty-four* between that time and his own, viz. A. D. 392. Jerome introduces his catalogue with the following just remonstrance: — 'Let those, who say the church has had no philosophers, nor eloquent and learned men, observe who and what they were who founded, established, and adorned it: let them cease to accuse our faith of rusticity, and confess their mistake.' (Jer. Prol. in Lib. de Sacr. Eccl.) Of these writers several, as Justin, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Bardesanes, Hippolitus, Eusebius, were voluminous writers. Christian writers abounded particularly about the year 178. Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, founded a library in that city, A. D. 212. Pamphilus, the friend of Origen, founded a library at Cæsarea, A. D. 294. Public defences were also set forth, by various advocates of the religion, in the course of the first three centuries. Within one hundred years after Christ's ascension, Quadratus and Aristides, whose works, except some few fragments of the first, are lost; and about twenty years afterwards, Justin Martyr, whose works remain, presented apologies for the Christian religion to the Roman emperors; Quadratus and Aristides to Adrian, Justin to Antoninus Pius, and a second to Marcus Antoninus. Melito, bishop of Sardis, and Apollinaris, bishop of Hierapolis, and Miltiades, men of great reputation, did the same to Marcus Antoninus, twenty years afterwards (Euseb. Hist. lib. iv. c. 26. See also Lardner, vol. ii. p. 666.); and ten years after this, Apollonius, who suffered martyrdom under the emperor Commodus, composed an apology for his faith, which he read in the senate, and which was afterwards published. (Lardner, vol. ii. p. 687.) Fourteen years after the apology of Apollonius, Tertullian addressed the work, which now remains under that name, to the governors of provinces in the Roman empire; and about the same time, Minucius Felix composed a defence of the Christian religion, which is still extant; and shortly after the conclusion of this century, copious defences of Christianity were published by Arnobius and Lactantius." Paley's Evidences, vol. ii. pp. 231. 233.

[1] The incidents above alluded to are, "the murmuring of the Grecian converts; the rest from persecution; Herod's death; the sending of Barnabas to Antioch, and Barnabas calling Paul to his assistance; Paul coming to a place, and finding there disciples; the clamour of the Jews; the complaint of artificers interested in the support of the popular religion; the reason assigned to induce Paul to give satisfaction to the Christians of Jerusalem. Had it not been for these occasions, it is probable that no notice whatever would have been taken of the number of converts, in several of the passages in which that notice now appears. All this tends to remove the suspicion of a design to exaggerate or deceive." Paley's Evidences, vol. ii. p. 214.

contestable proof of the wonderful propagation of Christianity. In the time of Nero, scarcely more than thirty years from the first publication of the Gospel at Jerusalem, there was not only a VAST MULTITUDE at Rome, who embraced the Christian religion, but also a large number of Christians, who were arraigned and condemned to death for the profession of their faith. But most strong is the testimony of the younger PLINY in his epistle to the emperor Trajan, A.D. 107, from which we learn that, during his proconsulate in Pontus and Bithynia, the Christians abounded in those provinces; that informations had been lodged against many on this account; and that he had made diligent inquiry, even by torture, into the nature of the charge against them, but could not discover any crime of which they were guilty, besides (what he terms) *an evil and excessive superstition.* He adds, that he thought it necessary, on this occasion, to consult the emperor, "*especially on account of the* GREAT NUMBER *of persons, who are in danger of suffering: for many, of all ages and of every rank, of both sexes, are accused and will be accused; nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country.*" And he further intimates that *the temples had been almost deserted, the sacred solemnities discontinued, and that the victims had met with but few purchasers.*[1] Thus *mightily grew the word of God and prevailed* in a province far distant from Judæa, within *seventy* years after its first promulgation.

The CHRISTIAN FATHERS attest the same rapid and extensive progress of the Gospel.

CLEMENT, the fellow-labourer of Paul (Phil. iv. 3.), testifies that this apostle preached "*both in the east and west, taught the* WHOLE WORLD *righteousness, and travelled to the utmost parts of the west.*"[2] JUSTIN MARTYR, who flourished in the second century, (A.D. 140, about thirty years after the date of Pliny's letter), says, that in his time "*there was* NO PART *of mankind, whether Barbarians or Greeks, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered up to the Creator of the world, through the name of the crucified Jesus.*"[3] IRENÆUS, who later in the same century (A.D. 170) was bishop of Lyons in Gaul, assures us that *the Gospel was preached* THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD, *to the extreme parts of the earth, by the apostles and their disciples*[4]; and that, in his time, there were *churches founded in Germany, Spain, Gaul, and in the East, Egypt, and Libya.*"[5] After fifty years (A.D. 190) TERTULLIAN, another Christian father, appeals to the Roman governors, saying,— "We were but of yesterday, and we have filled your cities, islands, towns, and burghs; the camp, the senate, and the forum;—every sex, age, rank, and condition are converts to Christianity."[6] Thirty years farther down, ORIGEN (A.D. 220) represents Christianity as now triumphant. "By the good providence of God," says he, "the Christian religion has so flourished and increased, continually, that it is now preached freely, and without molestation, although there were a thousand obstacles to the spreading of the doctrines of Jesus in the world."[7] About eighty years after this, A.D. 306, Christianity, under Constantine, became the established religion of the Roman empire.[8]

The *Character of the Age* in which the Christian faith was first propagated also demands a distinct consideration.

It was not a barbarous and uncivilised period, but was remarkable for those improvements by which the human faculties were strengthened. In most countries knowledge was diffused further and more universally than it had been at any former time; there never was a more learned, more philosophical, or more discerning age, than that in which the Christian religion was proposed to mankind; and when, from the profound peace which the world enjoyed under the Roman government, an

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[1] See the testimonies of Tacitus and Pliny at length, pp. 175—180. *suprà.*
[2] Clement, Epist. i. ad Corinth. § 5.
[3] Justin. Dial. cum Tryphone, p. 345.
[4] Irenæus, adv. Hæres, lib. i c. 2.
[5] Ibid. c. 4.
[6] Apol. c. 37.
[7] In Cels. lib. i.
[8] For a full view of the universal and rapid propagation of Christianity, with the various testimonies of Christian, and especially of Pagan authors, see M. Vernet's elaborate Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tomes viii. ix. x. See also Dr. Benson's History of the Propagation of Christianity.

easy communication subsisted between all countries, so that wise men could not only judge of such extraordinary events as had happened, but could also freely impart to one another their sentiments concerning them. Now, in such an enlightened age as this was, if the *facts* and doctrines preached by the apostles had been false, they would instantly have been discerned to be so; and the confutation of them would have quickly passed from one country to another, to the utter confusion of the persons who had endeavoured to propagate the belief of them. The generality of the first converts, it is true, were men in the middle and lower stations of life; but even these, in an age of such knowledge and intercourse, were sufficiently secured against false pretensions of any kind. Indeed, supposing even that their minds were but imperfectly imbued with knowledge, their attachment to their first religious notions would be strong in proportion to their ignorance, and no argument would be sufficient to induce persons of this character and rank to change their principles but evident miracles. Wherefore, this class of persons being converted in such numbers, and so early, is an absolute demonstration that many and great miracles were every where wrought by the first preachers of the Gospel. But the first converts to Christianity were not confined to the middle and lower ranks of life; even in the earliest age, we find among them men of character, rank, learning, and judgment, whose offices and stations rendered them conspicuous; courtiers, statesmen, chief priests and rulers, governors of cities, proconsuls, consuls, and heathen philosophers[1]; many of whom wrote learned and able apologies for the Christian faith, which are still extant. In process of time, it was not a *single* distinguished person, in this city, or in that nation, who obeyed the Gospel; but vast multitudes of the noble, the learned, the wise, and the mighty, as well as others, in every country (though they could have no temptation or inducement whatever to forsake the religions in which they had been educated), voluntarily embraced Christianity, and worshipped Jesus Christ as God, constrained by the irresistible force of truth in the evidences of the Gospel.

A circumstance that adds weight to the preceding facts, and which therefore deserves particular attention, is, that the *Profession of Christianity was followed by no worldly advantage* that could induce men to renounce their native religions and embrace a form of worship so different from every thing that was then practised.

On the contrary, those who renounced heathenism not only denied themselves many gratifications in which their respective religions had formerly indulged them, but also voluntarily subjected themselves to a rigid and severe course of life, widely different from that to which they had been accustomed, and to the forfeiture of the favour of their families and friends, as well as exposed themselves to the loss of honour, fame, and fortune, yea, even to the most excruciating and terrible sufferings. By the magistrates they were subjected to heavy fines, their property was confiscated, and they were made to suffer a variety of ignominious punishments, which, to generous minds, are more grievous than death itself. They were imprisoned and proscribed; they were banished; they were condemned to work in the mines; they were thrown to be devoured by wild beasts, or made to fight with them in the theatres for the diversion of the people; they were put to the torture; they were placed in red-hot iron chairs; they were crucified, impaled, burnt alive; — in short, they were subjected to all the torments which cruelty and barbarity, refined and inflamed by revenge, could invent; — torments, the bare mention of which excites horror in the human mind.[2] Now, as all these things are most repugnant to human nature, it follows that whatever was the cause of them would be received with the utmost reluctance and difficulty. Nothing, therefore,

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[1] Arnobius, who flourished in the former part of the third century, urging the triumphant efficacy of the Christian faith, says, "Who would not believe it, when he sees in how short a time it has conquered so great a part of the world; when men of so great understanding, *orators, grammarians, rhetoricians, lawyers, physicians, and philosophers,* have renounced their former sentiments, and have embraced the doctrines of the Gospel?" Adv. Gentes, lib. ii. p. 21.

[2] See an examination of the difficulties attendant on the first propagation of Christianity, in the Appendix, No. V. *infrà.*

but evidence — the most convincing and resistless — could make men, in such circumstances, acknowledge the truth of the Gospel history, and receive a religion founded thereon, which plunged them into such certain and terrible misfortunes. The blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church: their constancy under the tortures to which they were exposed excited the attention of many distinguished philosophers[1], and made them inquisitive into the nature of that religion which could endue the mind with so much strength, and overcome the fear of death, nay, even raise an earnest desire of it, though it appeared in all its terrors. This, they found, had not been effected by all the doctrines of those philosophers, whose writings they had carefully studied, and who had been labouring at this great point. The sight of these dying and tormented martyrs engaged them to search into the history and doctrines of him for whom they had suffered. The more they investigated, the more they were convinced; until their conviction grew so strong, that they themselves embraced the same truths, and either actually laid down their lives, or were always in readiness so to do, rather than depart from the faith and hope of the Gospel. To adopt the declaration of one whose hatred of Christianity will acquit him of intentional exaggeration on this point:—" While that great body" (the Roman empire) "was invaded by open violence or undermined by slow decay, *a pure and humble religion* gently insinuated itself into the minds of men; grew up in silence and obscurity; derived new vigour from opposition; and finally erected the triumphant banner of the cross on the ruins of the capitol. Nor was the influence of Christianity confined to the period or to the limits of the Roman empire. After a revolution of thirteen or fourteen centuries, that religion is still professed by the nations of Europe, the most distinguished portion of human kind in arts and learning, as well as in arms. By the industry and zeal of the Europeans, it has been widely diffused to the most distant shores of Asia and Africa; and by means of their colonies has been firmly established from Canada to Chili, in a world unknown to the ancients."[2]

The success of the Gospel, independently of its being a literal and most signal fulfilment of prophecy, affords a most striking proof of its truth and divine origin, when we consider the weakness and meanness of the instruments that were employed in this great work. "Destitute of all human advantages, protected by no authority, assisted by no art, not recommended by the reputation of its author, not enforced by eloquence in its advocates, *the word of God grew mightily and prevailed.* Twelve men, poor and artless, and illiterate, we behold triumphing over the fiercest and most determined opposition, — over the tyranny of the magistrate, and the subtleties of the philosopher,—over the prejudices of the Gentile, and the bigotry of the Jew." They offered violence to no man; they did not go about to compel any, by force, to entertain the doctrine which they preached, and to enlist under their banner; they were not attended with legions of armed men, to dispose men for the reception of their doctrine, by plunder, by violence, by tortures; neither did they go about to tempt and allure men to their way of thinking and acting by the promises of temporal rewards, and by the hopes of riches and honours; nor did they use any artificial insinuations of wit and eloquence to gain upon the minds of men. On the contrary, they utterly disclaimed, both in word and deed, all violent and harsh measures of proceeding, all force and compulsion upon the human conscience, and all conversions made by the terror of punishment or the sword. The weapons of their warfare were

[1] Justin Martyr, Quadratus, Aristides, Athenagoras, Tertullian, Lactantius, Arnobius, and others.

[2] Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. ii. p. 265.

the purity, spirituality, and reasonableness of the doctrines which they delivered, the authority of the high name by whose commission they preached, and the miraculous works which they were enabled to perform; nor did they use any other arms to conquer the virulence of their enemies, and to gain proselytes to the faith, except patience, meekness, humility, submission to the civil power in all things lawful, and universal good will to mankind. The followers of Jesus were numerous enough, long before the empire became Christian, to have attempted the way of force, had it been permitted to them; and the insults, the oppressions, the persecutions which they suffered, from their pagan enemies, were enough to have provoked the most passive tempers to some acts of hostility and resistance. But every one knows that they had recourse to no arms besides those of the Spirit; they took no advantage of distracted times, to raise commotions in behalf of the *new* religion, or to suppress the old one: yet with meekness, and patience, and suffering; by piety, by reason, by the secret influence of the divine blessing on these feeble efforts, the doctrine of the cross insensibly gained ground, spread itself far and wide; and in the end became victorious over all the rage, and power, and sophistry of an unbelieving world. It succeeded in a peculiar degree, and in a peculiar manner: it derived that success from truth; and obtained it under circumstances where falsehood must have been detected and crushed: and the Christian religion has remained to this day, in full vigour, notwithstanding its adversaries have every where strenuously attacked it both with arguments and with arms. But vain have been the efforts of its antagonists: all that they have written and said has only contributed to elucidate and confirm those parts of Scripture, which had not before been fully examined. Driven from the field by the overpowering weight and evidence of *facts*, the insidious ingenuity of the infidel and sceptic has been employed in the futile and preposterous endeavours of accounting for the miraculous success of Christianity from causes merely human.

Accordingly, the eminent historian, Gibbon (the elegance of whose style has conferred an alarming popularity on the licentiousness of his opinions) — though he affects to admit that the propagation of the Gospel was owing to the convincing evidence of its doctrine, and to the ruling providence of its great Author, — has assigned the reception of Christianity to *five causes;* each of which he has represented as in reality unconnected with any divine interposition. And as his account of the spread of Christianity has been industriously circulated by the enemies of divine revelation, a few remarks on this historian's five causes may properly claim a place here. The causes in question are as follow: — "I. The Inflexible and Intolerant Zeal of the first Christians, derived from the Jews, but purified from the unsocial spirit which had deterred the Gentiles from embracing the law. II. The Doctrine of a Future Life, improved by every additional circumstance which could give weight and efficacy to that important truth. III. The Miraculous Powers ascribed to the primitive church. IV. The Pure and Austere Morals of the first Christians. V. The Union and Discipline of the Christian Republic, which gradually formed an inde-

pendent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman empire."[1] Such are the historian's five causes; which, unhappily for his sagacity, are totally inadequate to the effects he supposes them to have produced: for they could not operate till Christianity had obtained a considerable establishment in the world; and the FACT is (as we have already shown from the testimonies of heathen as well as of Christian writers[2]), that *the first and greatest miracle, in the propagation of Christianity, had been wrought* BEFORE *the causes assigned by him could begin to operate.* "Were it, indeed, even to be conceded, — as in reason it never will be, — that the causes assigned by Mr. Gibbon for the rapid extension of Christianity were *adequate* and true, one difficulty, great as it is, would only be removed for the substitution of a greater. For, what human ingenuity, though gifted with the utmost reach of discrimination, can ever attempt the solution of the question, — how were all these occult causes (for hidden they must have been), which the genius of Gibbon first discovered, foreseen, their combination known, and all their wonderful effects distinctly described for many centuries prior to their existence, — or to the commencement of the period of their alleged operation?"[3]

Let us, however, briefly examine these secondary causes, and see if they really are adequate to the effects ascribed to them.

1. The first is "*the Inflexible and Intolerant Zeal of the first Christians.*"

But how an inflexible and intolerant zeal, such as condemned even those practices which, in the opinion of the historian, "might perhaps have been tolerated as mere civil institutions," could invite pagans, amidst all their prejudices, to embrace Christianity, does not seem altogether easy to explain. It might, indeed, produce the only effect which the historian in the recapitulation of his argument might assign to it, viz. it might supply Christians with that "invincible valour" which should keep them firm to their principles, but it could hardly be of service in converting pagans. Is not, then, this secondary cause *inadequate to its declared effect?* But we deny the fact that any kind or any degree of intolerance existed among the primitive Christians; on the contrary, *they* experienced every possible kind of suffering and torture from the intolerance of their heathen persecutors. And, as to their zeal, we maintain that it did not bear the slightest similitude to the fierceness and bigotry of the Jews, from whom it is insinuated that they derived it. "It was derived from very different causes, and aimed at far nobler ends. It was not the narrow and temporal interests of *one* nation, but the general reformation and the spiritual happiness of the *whole world*, which the teachers of Christianity were anxious to promote. That firmness which may be construed into intolerance, and that activity which we are content to call by the name of zeal, had, in the usual course of human affairs, a tendency to retard rather than to facilitate the propagation of the Gospel. The Christian, instead of falling into the fashionable and popular intercommunity of worship, disdained — amid the terrors of impending death — to throw incense on the altar of Jupiter; he boldly pronounced the whole system of pagan mythology imposture, and charged the whole ritual of its external devotions with grovelling superstition and profane idolatry."

2. To the next secondary cause alleged we may certainly attribute more force; and the friends of Christianity will very readily acknowledge "*the Doctrine of a Future Life*" (delivered as it was with the

[1] Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. ii. p. 267.
[2] See pp. 301—303. *suprà.*
[3] Keith's Evidence from Prophecy, p. 51. note.

demonstration of the spirit and of power) to have had its share in spreading the belief of it.

But the success, perhaps, was owing rather to this demonstration of spirit and of power than to the doctrine itself, which was by no means suited either to the expectations or wishes of the pagan world in general; for it was offensive to the Epicureans, by the punishments it denounced against the voluptuous and the wicked; and it was not attractive to the vulgar by the very rewards which it proposed. The pride of the philosopher was shocked by the doctrine of a resurrection, the mode of which he was unable to comprehend; and the imaginations of other men were feebly impressed by the representations of a future state, which did not hold out the serene sky and the luxurious enjoyments of an elysium. Men, indeed, must have believed the Gospel in general before they believed the doctrine of futurity on its authority: they must have been Christian believers before they admitted that doctrine; so that this doctrine could not have been a cause of the propagation of Christianity.

3. "*The Miraculous Powers ascribed to the primitive church*" are assigned as a third cause by the historian, who proceeds, in a style of the most contemptuous and bitter derision, to insinuate that these powers were never possessed.

The considerations already offered on the subject of miracles[1], to which the reader is referred, prove that miraculous powers were not merely ascribed, but actually possessed by the apostles and first preachers of Christianity; to which we may add, that neither Porphyry, Celsus, Julian, nor any other of its most virulent enemies, denied, or attempted to deny, the existence and reality of those miracles; and Christianity has nothing to fear from the improbable cause (magic) to which they ascribed them. Besides, the Christian miracles were liable to peculiar difficulties which obstructed their reception; so that if they had not really and indisputably been performed, they neither could nor would have been credited. "The multitude of popular gods admitted among the heathens did, by necessary consequence, occasion such a multitude of *pretended* miracles that they insensibly *lost* their force, and *sunk* in their esteem. Though the philosophers in general, and men of reading and contemplation, could not but discover the grossness and absurdity of the civil religion, yet this could have little effect on the *vulgar* or *themselves*:—not on the *vulgar*, because it was the business of the wisest and most politic heads zealously to support and encourage them in their practices; not on *themselves*, because, if they despised their gods, they must despise their miracles too."[2] Now, under these circumstances, miracles *ascribed* to the first propagators of Christianity must have created an immediate and stubborn prejudice against their cause, and nothing could have subdued that prejudice but miracles really and visibly performed. Mr. Gibbon's third cause, therefore, is as inadequate as the two preceding.

4. A fourth cause is "*the Pure and Austere Morals of the first Christians*," which he reduces to a mean and timid repentance for former sins, and to an impetuous zeal in supporting the reputation of the society in which they were engaged.

"But surely, in the eyes of the haughty and jealous Romans, such repentance and such zeal must have equally excited *opposition* to Christianity. The first would have provoked contempt among persons of their daring self-sufficiency; and the other would have awakened the jealousy of the magistrate. True it is, that the Christians had virtues of a nobler kind. It is also true that those virtues did ultimately triumph over the scorn and malice of their foes; and it is true, that a religion, producing such effects on its followers, and deriving success from such means, carries with it a presumptive proof of which imposture never could boast." Though the historian ascribes the growth of Christianity to the exemplary virtues of its first converts, which encouraged others to join their communion, he does not account for

[1] See pp. 168, 169. 174. 230. *suprà.*

[2] Weston on the Rejection of Christian Miracles by the Heathen, p. 348.

the exemplary virtues of the first converts themselves, nor for the conversion of abandoned heathens to the Gospel of Christ, and to holiness of heart and in life. The virtues of the first Christians arose from their faith, and not their faith from their virtues. Nothing but a conviction of its truth could have induced its first converts to repent, and to require their proselytes to repent, as a condition of salvation.

5. The last secondary cause, mentioned by this writer, is "*the Union and Discipline of the Christian*" church, or "*Republic,*" as he is pleased to term it.

It must be acknowledged that union essentially contributes to secure order and stability, and to enlarge the interests of *every* society; but it is an incontrovertible fact, that the Gospel was propagated before its professors were sufficiently numerous to establish a discipline, or to form themselves into societies. And when they increased, their divisions (for divisions early rent the church of Christ) must have checked its progress; and their strict discipline was more likely to deter men from their communion than to invite or allure them to it. If the Gospel succeeded, not only amidst the furious assaults of its enemies, but the no less violent contentions of its friends, we must look for its success in some other cause than those which the sceptical historian has assigned, and which the enemies of Christianity have so industriously circulated.[1] The universal prevalence, therefore, of the despised doctrine of a crucified lawgiver against the allurements of flesh and blood, the blandishments of the world, the writings of the learned, and the sanguinary persecutions of the great and powerful, must ever be regarded by every sincere and candid inquirer as an irrefragable argument that its original was divine, and its protector almighty.

Notwithstanding the force and variety of the evidence in behalf of Christianity, its opposers continue to object, that *they* do not see realised the prophecies and intimations relative to the universality of the Christian religion; — that it was rejected by the greater part of the Jews in the time of Christ, and also by the greater part of the Gentiles; — that a large portion of the world *at present* receives the Koran; — that Christianity is known only to a small portion of mankind; and, finally, that if the Christian revelation came from God, no part of the human race would remain ignorant of it, no understanding would fail to be convinced by it. These objections are plausible; but, like those already noticed in the course of this volume, they fall to the ground as soon as they are subjected to the test of critical examination. That the victorious propagation of the Gospel has not been, hitherto, so complete, as to answer the promise of *an absolute universality,* we readily acknowledge, but are in no pain for the event[2]; as the same oracles which have thus far been verified suppose the present condition of things; and, what is more, assure us of a time to come, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in.

(1.) *The rejection of the Gospel by the unbelieving* JEWS, *who were contemporary with Christ and his apostles,* is no argument against the divine original of Christianity.

[1] White's Bampton Lectures, pp. 138—144. Chelsum's Remarks on Mr. Gibbon's Decline and Fall, pp. 8—13. Bp. Watson's Apology for Christianity in a Series of Letters to Mr. Gibbon, letters i.—v. The wilful misrepresentations and blunders of the sceptical historian are likewise exposed with equal learning and elegance in Mr. Kett's Bampton Lectures for 1790, 8vo. 1792 (2d edition); and in the late learned and Rev. J. Milner's treatise, entitled "Gibbon's Account of Christianity considered." 8vo. 1808. (2d. edit.)

[2] "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it *shall* speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it *shall* surely come, it *will not* tarry." Habakkuk ii. 3.

The Almighty never acts towards his accountable creatures in such a manner as to *force* their judgment, and irresistibly to influence their moral conduct; but, on the contrary, leaves them in all such instances to the application of their rational powers, and to that freedom of will, which are essential to a right faith and practice. It depends wholly on ourselves, on the affections of the heart, rather than on the acuteness of the understanding, whether we will seriously and earnestly advert to the evidence, which is offered in proof of religious truth, and candidly give it a fair, honest, and impartial examination. To argue, therefore, either for the credibility, or falsehood, of any point of history or doctrine, merely from the numbers who receive or reject it, is a very fallacious way of informing the judgment; and he must be very little acquainted with the usual course of the world, who has not found by his own experience, that, as there are some men capable of believing the grossest absurdities, so there are others equally notorious for questioning, denying, and opposing the plainest truths. If therefore, in the case before us, we consider the circumstances and prejudices of the Jews, during the time of Christ, we shall be able to account most satisfactorily for their infidelity then, as well as for their continuance to the present day in rejecting him as the Messiah; and shall further derive additional evidence to the truth of the Gospel. It is certain that great numbers of Jews and devout proselytes were converted at first to Christianity [1]; which plainly showed that it was not destitute of proof or truth, and that it was not rejected for want of evidence, but for some other reasons, which it is not difficult to assign.

One great and general cause, to which the infidelity of the Jews is to be ascribed, is their *wickedness;* which certainly is a cause sufficient to produce such an effect. If a man be vicious, he is disposed to reject evident truths, and to embrace ridiculous opinions. That vice weakens the understanding, infatuates the judgment, and hinders it from discerning between truth and falsehood, especially in matters of morality and religion, is a truth not more constantly affirmed in the Scriptures than confirmed by reason and experience. How wicked the Jews were, is evident from many passages of the New Testament [2]; and Josephus, their own historian and a priest of Jerusalem, informs us of the enormous villanies practised by them. "It is," says he, "impossible to give a particular account of all their iniquities. Thus much, in general, it may suffice to say, that there never was a city which suffered such miseries, or a race of men from the beginning of the world who so abounded in wickedness." . . . . . "I verily believe that if the Romans had delayed to destroy these wicked wretches, the city would have either been swallowed up by an earthquake, or overwhelmed by the waters, or struck with fire from heaven like another Sodom; for it produced a far more impious generation than those who suffered such punishment." [3] Can it then be a matter of astonishment

[1] See the proofs of this fact, *suprà*, pp. 301, 302.

[2] See an account of the extreme corruption of the Jewish people, *infrà*, Vol. III. pp. 406—410.

[3] Josephus, De Bell. Jud. lib. v. c. 11. § 5. and c. 13. § 6. The whole of his fourth,

that the Gospel should meet with no better reception amongst such monsters of iniquity? How could the voluptuous Sadducee digest the doctrines of mortification and self-denial, of taking up his cross, and following the Captain of his salvation through sufferings? How could the proud and haughty Pharisee condescend to be meek and lowly, and instead of worshipping God in *show*, learn to worship him in spirit and in truth? What methods could be taken to win those who were resolved to quarrel with every one? What reason could prevail on them who were never disposed to hear reason, who were always cloudy and sullen, self-willed and obstinate, and "exceedingly mad" against those who differed from them? What more could be done for them who had withstood the last, the utmost means of conviction, and had rendered themselves incapable of mercy, by blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of God, by ascribing to the power of the devil those miracles which had manifestly been wrought by the power of God? *No man*, said Jesus Christ, *can come unto me except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him.* (John vi. 44.) No man can embrace the Christian religion without the help of divine grace (which neither forces the mind, nor controls the moral liberty of man): and divine grace is justly withheld from those who have made themselves unworthy of it. In short, a judicial infatuation seized the Jews. God left them to that blindness and hardness of heart, which they by their sins had brought upon themselves; so that *they could not see with their eyes, and understand with their hearts, and be converted and healed.* (John xii. 40.)

A still more evident cause of the rejection of Jesus Christ by the Jews is to be found in their strong prejudice, and adherence to former opinions and practices; by which their understandings were blinded and unable to see the evidence produced. They were offended at the meanness of his life and the ignominy of his death. The prophets had employed the loftiest images to set forth the glories of the Messiah; and in describing his spiritual kingdom, had borrowed their metaphors from earthly kingdoms. What was thus figuratively spoken, the Jews had expounded literally; and these traditionary expositions, being transmitted from generation to generation, produced in the Jews a notion of a mighty temporal prince;—a notion highly gratifying to a people whose affairs were on the decline, and whose polity seemed to be tending towards dissolution. Impressed with this expectation, the Jews would not recognise the Messiah in Jesus Christ; they looked for a prince of they knew not what high extraction; but, with respect to Jesus, they took it for granted that he was the carpenter's son. Having learned from their prophets that Bethlehem was to be the place of the Messiah's nativity, because Jesus resided at Nazareth, they hastily concluded, that he was born there, and that *no good thing could come out of Galilee.* They were pleasing themselves with gaudy dreams of greatness, with the prospect of conquest and empire; but he declared that his *kingdom was not of this world,* and accordingly he taught them,—not how to shake off the

fifth, and sixth books abound with instances of the consummate depravity and desperate wickedness of the Jews.

hated Roman yoke, but how to liberate themselves from the greater yoke and tyranny of sin;—not how to triumph over foreign enemies, but how to subdue their domestic adversaries, their lusts and vices. They hoped to enjoy certain rights and privileges above the rest of mankind; but Christ came to break down the wall of partition, and to unite both Jews and Gentiles as one body, under one head. They expected to become lords of the nations, and to have Jerusalem for their seat of empire; and were shocked to hear that their city and temple would be destroyed, and that *all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.* We know also that, about the time of Christ, there arose many false Messiahs and false prophets, who drew away much people after them. And even those persons, who were too wise to lend an ear to these impostors, would yet many of them become unreasonably suspicious, and mislead themselves for very fear of being misled by others. Seeing so many impostors abroad, they would be apt to regard all men as impostors, and reject the true Messiah among so many false ones. At length, when they saw him put to an ignominious death, that very thing was sufficient to cancel all his miracles, and to convince them that he could not be their Messiah, little considering that he was the *Lamb of God that was thus to take away the sins of the world.*

Besides the preceding prejudices, which were common to the Jewish nation collectively, the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, had particular motives for rejecting the Gospel. They hated Christ, because he had reproved and openly exposed their pride, their hypocrisy, their uncharitableness, their covetousness, their zeal for traditions; and their hatred against him disposed them to think ill of him, and to do him all ill offices. We need not wonder when we find them upon all occasions opposing and calumniating him, if we consider that they were a wicked set of men, and that he had publicly and frequently reproved them. They were highly incensed against him, and in the judgment which they made of him, they were directed by their passions, not by their reason. Nor did anger and resentment only furnish them with prejudices against Christ, but self-interest also and worldly policy. The people who had seen the miracles of Christ, particularly that miracle by which he had fed a great multitude, had at one time, as St. John relates, a design to make him their king, concluding, reasonably enough, that under such a leader they should be victorious. Therefore Christ, if he had been a deceiver, and had entertained ambitious designs, might easily have made himself a prince, and might have incited the people to shake off the Roman yoke, which was grievous to them.

The chief priests and principal persons among the Jews thought, that if Christ should make such an attempt they should be ruined, whatsoever the consequences of it were. If the Jews under his conduct should endeavour to recover their liberties, and fail in it, they knew that the nation would be severely punished by the Romans. Nor was their prospect less bad, if Christ should deliver the people from their subjection to a foreign power, and rule over them himself; for though they hated the Romans, yet doubtless they thought that

Christ would be a worse ruler for them than any Roman governor. They knew that he had a bad opinion of them, and that he had exposed their vices; and therefore they concluded that the establishment of his authority would be the ruin of theirs. Thus they were incited not only by resentment, but, as they imagined, by interest, to deny that Christ was the Messiah, to oppose him, and to destroy him; for since they were persuaded that the Messiah should be a temporal king, they could not acknowledge Christ to be the Messiah, unless at the same time they owned him to be their king.

They succeeded in their endeavours, they stirred up the people, they intimidated the governor, they prevailed to have Christ crucified, and by his death they thought themselves at last secure from all these evils. But he arose again, and his disciples appeared openly in Jerusalem, working miracles, and teaching that Jesus was the Messiah. One would at first think that no man could withstand such evidence; but we shall not so much wonder at their obstinacy, if we observe that their fears, and, as they thought, their interests, led them again to oppose the truth. They considered that they were the persons who had represented Christ as a man who had lost his senses, a demoniac, an impostor, a magician, a violator of the law, a seditious teacher, a rebel, an enemy to Cæsar, and a false Messiah; who had instigated the people, and who had persuaded Pilate to crucify him; they heard that the apostles wrought miracles in the name of Christ, and they concluded that, if the apostles were permitted to proceed in this manner, they would convert a great part of the Jews; and they feared that, if the doctrines taught by Christ's disciples were received, they who had been his implacable enemies should be accounted not only ignorant and blind guides, but dishonest men; that they should not only lose their credit and authority, but be exposed to the resentment of the incensed multitude; and therefore they thought that the best way to secure themselves was to deter and hinder the apostles from appearing any more in public, and from preaching the Gospel. And when the disciples continued to perform the functions of their ministry, the high priest asked them, saying, *Did we not straitly command you that you should not teach in this name? And behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.* (Acts v. 28.)

Miracles were wrought to convince them; but when a man is violently bent to believe or disbelieve, he is more than half persuaded that things are as he desires. They hastily concluded that those miracles were either delusions and impostures, or wonderful works performed by the aid of evil spirits.

From these ill dispositions proceeded suitable effects; for they persecuted the first Christians, they accused them to the Roman magistrates of sedition, they beat them in their synagogues, they imprisoned them, they banished them, they put many of them to death, and strove to the utmost of their power to destroy this rising sect. Some[1] ancient writers assure us, that the Jews took the pains to

[1] Justin Martyr and Eusebius. See Justin, p. 171. and Thirlby's Notes, and Fabricius de Ver. Rel. Christ. p 665.

send persons from Jerusalem into all countries, to accuse the Christians of atheism and other crimes, and to make them as odious as they possibly could.[1]

Such were the principal causes of the infidelity of the Jews, and of their rejection of Christ as the Messiah, *at first:* nor is it difficult to conceive what may be the reasons of their persisting in the same infidelity *now.* In the first place, *on the part of the Jews,* most (if not all) of the same reasons which gave birth to their infidelity continue to nourish it, particularly their obstinacy, their vain hopes and expectations of worldly greatness, and the false christs and false prophets, who at different times have arisen up among them. To which may be added their want of charitableness towards the Christians, and continuing to live insulated from all the rest of mankind. All these circumstances, together, present great difficulties to their conversion. Secondly, *on the part of the world,* the grand obstacles to the conversion of the Jews are, the prevalence of Mohammedism and other false religions, the schisms of Christians, the unholy lives of *nominal* Christians, and particularly the cruelties which, on various pretexts and at different times, have been most unjustly inflicted on this unhappy people.

From the account which we have given of the obstinacy of the Jews, and of the causes whence it arose, it appears that their unbelief is no objection to the truth of the Gospel. The modern Jews, therefore, reason weakly when they say, that their ancestors would not and could not have rejected Christ, if the miracles related in the Gospel had been really wrought. Against this argument we may also observe, that it can do no service to a Jew, because it would prove too much. It would prove that Moses wrought no miracles, since the whole people of Israel often rebelled against him: it would prove that many of the prophets recorded in the Old Testament were false prophets, because they were persecuted by the Jews. The Jews are not able to give any reason why they acknowledge the law of Moses to be a divine revelation, which will not directly and more strongly establish the truth and authority of the Gospel.

So far indeed is the infidelity of the Jews from being an objection to the argument from prophecy concerning the spread of Christianity, that, on the contrary, it corroborates that evidence for the truth of the Gospel. For, by their infidelity, we gain a great number of unsuspected witnesses to the truth of the Old Testament; and, by their dispersion, these witnesses abound in the richest and most commercial parts of the world. Had the body of the Jews been converted to Christianity, they might have been supposed to conspire with the Christians in forging and corrupting the prophecies relating to the Messiah; but now their infidelity cuts off all cavils and suspicions of that kind, and makes their testimony, like that of sworn enemies, the more favourable, the more unquestionable.

Again, by the infidelity of the Jews, and their dispersion in con-

[1] Jortin's Discourses concerning the Truth of the Christian Religion, disc. i. Bp. Newton's Works, vol. v. dissertation xxix. See also Bp. Conybeare's Sermons, vol. i. serm. 2. and Bp. Kidder's Demonstration of the Messias. (Boyle Lectures, vol. i. pp. 105—112.)

sequence of it, many predictions of Moses and the prophets, of Christ and his apostles, are remarkably fulfilled; so that instead of doing disservice to the Christian cause, it does it real honour, and tends wonderfully to promote and advance it in the world. And after all the changes and revolutions, after all the persecutions and massacres which they have seen and undergone for more than seventeen hundred years, they still subsist a distinct people in order to the completion of other prophecies, that (Rom. xi. 25, 26.) "when the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, all Israel may be saved." There is nothing parallel to this to be found in history from the creation of the world down to this time, and it is no less than a standing miracle in all ages and countries for the truth of the Christian religion.

Besides, it is a great advantage to the Christian religion to have been first preached and propagated in a nation of unbelievers, as it frees the account of the facts from all suspicion of fraud and imposture. Designing men may easily be supposed to carry on a trick among their creatures and dependants, among those of the same side and party, of the same profession and interest; but how was it possible for a small number of poor illiterate fishermen and tent-makers to succeed in an attempt of this nature among thousands of secret spies and open enemies? Nothing but truth, nothing but divine truth, and upheld by a divine power, could have stood the trial and borne down so much malice and opposition before it.[1]

(2.) *The rejection of the Gospel by the unbelieving* GENTILES, *who were contemporaries with Christ and his apostles, is no objection to the truth of Christianity.*

Many of the arguments which have been stated in the preceding pages, with reference to the infidelity of the Jews, may be applied with respect to the Gentile nations, who had many prejudices in common with the Jews, and some that were peculiar to themselves.

The causes of unbelief, which were common to them with the Jews, were, a great corruption of manners; the prejudice of education, which led the Gentiles to despise the doctrines and religious rites of Christianity previously to examination[2]; the purity of the

[1] Bp. Newton's Works, vol. v. p. 142. "The case of the Jews may be useful in correcting a vain opinion which every one almost is sometimes apt to entertain, that had he lived in the time of our Saviour and conversed with him personally, had he been an ear-witness to his words, an eye-witness to his works, he should have been a better Christian, he should have resigned all his scruples, and have believed and obeyed without doubt and without reserve. Alas! they, who are infidels now, would in all probability have been infidels then. The Jews saw the miracles of our blessed Lord and yet believed not: 'Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.'" (John xx. 29.) Ibid. p. 144. The unbelief of the Jews is discussed in a clear and conclusive manner, in the last three discourses of Mr. Franks's "Hulsean Lectures for 1821, on the Evidences of Christianity, as they were stated and enforced in the discourses of our Lord: comprising a connected view of the claims which Jesus advanced, of the arguments by which he supported them, and of his statements respecting the causes, progress, and consequences of infidelity." Cambridge, 1821. 8vo.

[2] The state of religion among the Greeks and Romans had a tendency to induce this disposition. Christianity had nothing in it to attract their notice: it mixed with no politics; — it produced no fine writers; — the nature, office, and ministry of Jesus would be alien to their conceptions. Its connection with Judaism would injure it with the learned heathen, who regarded Jehovah himself as the idol of the Jewish nation, and this would preclude all inquiry among men of education, which accounts also for their silence on the

precepts of the Gospel, which were entirely opposite to their vicious inclinations and practices; the temporal inconveniences which attended the profession of Christianity, and the temporal advantages which might be secured or obtained by rejecting or opposing it; the mean appearance which Christ had made in the world, and his ignominious death, which they knew not how to reconcile with the divine power ascribed to him by his disciples; and the contempt entertained by the philosophers for the rank, acquirements, sufferings, and martyrdoms of the first Christians. All these things produced in the greater part of the Jews an aversion for the Gospel, and they had the same effect on the unconverted Gentiles.

But besides these causes of unbelief, the Gentiles had many others peculiar to themselves. They entertained a high notion of the efficacy of magic, of the strength of charms and incantations, and of the almost uncontrollable power of their demons and demi-gods; and this notion led the greater part of them to reject the Christian miracles. They were, moreover, extremely careless and indifferent about all religions in general; consequently they had only very imperfect notions of the Divine Being, and of the spiritual adoration which was due to him alone; and they were offended at the unsociableness of Christianity, and its utter incompatibility with the established worship of their several countries.

Further, the great and powerful men among the Gentiles, for want of attending to the intrinsic merits of the new doctrine, and of understanding it thoroughly, were not able to reconcile it with their particular views and interests; much less was it to be expected that the priests, artificers, and artisans, who lived by the profits of idolatry, would readily open their eyes and ears to receive a faith so utterly subversive of their present gain. Nor would the bad opinion, which other nations in general had conceived of the Jews, permit them easily to pass a favourable judgment upon the Christians, between whom and the Jews they did not, for a considerable time, make a sufficient distinction; accounting Christianity to be only a particular sort of Judaism, and calling the Christians *atheists*, because they taught that the gods of the nations were either nothing at all, or dead men, or demons, and because they worshipped a spiritual Deity in a spiritual manner, and had neither temples nor altars.

subject. In this manner Christianity *was* treated by Tacitus and by Pliny the Elder. *Without inquiry*, Tacitus disposes of the whole question (see p. 175. *suprà*), by calling it a *pestilent superstition*,—a proof how little he knew or concerned himself about the matter. Let the reader peruse the instructions of Paul to the Roman converts (Rom. xii. 9., xiii. 13.), and then judge of this *pestilent superstition*; or, let him take Pliny's description of the conduct and principles of the Christians (see p. 179. *suprà*), and then call Christianity a *pestilent superstition*. On the words of Tacitus, Dr. Paley founds these observations:— 1. The learned men of that age beheld Christianity in a distant and obscure view. 2. But little reliance can be placed on the most acute judgments, in subjects which they are pleased to despise. If Christianity had not survived to tell its own story, it must have gone down to posterity as a *pestilent* or *pernicious superstition*. 3. This contempt, prior to examination, is an intellectual vice, from which the greatest faculties of the mind are not free. And, 4. We need not be surprised that many writers of that age did *not* mention Christianity, when those who *did* appear to have misconceived its nature and character. See Paley's Evidences, vol. ii. pp. 307—320., where the preceding hints are illustrated at length.

Afterwards, when the Gospel began to spread, and false teachers and vicious professors infested the church (as Christ had foretold), the Gentiles would not distinguish between the factious heretics (who wished to make themselves heads of parties) and the true disciples of Christ: and, as the ancient Christians frequently complained, they laid the crimes of these false and immoral brethren to the charge of Christianity: nor could the singular innocence and piety of the Christians secure them from malicious and false accusations.

Lastly, the antiquity of paganism, and the many distinguished blessings which (it was imagined) the propitious influence of their heroes and gods had from time to time conferred upon their several countries, together with the simple and artless manner in which the apostles and first Christians, and their followers, propagated a religion that had nothing in its external appearance to recommend it,—concurred, in addition to the causes already stated, to lessen the force of the miracles wrought by Jesus Christ and his apostles; and prevented no small numbers of the rich, the great, and the learned, from giving in their names among the earliest converts to the faith and obedience which is in Jesus Christ. "Such were the prejudices of the Jews and Gentiles, which made so many of them unwilling and unfit to receive the Christian religion. But there is reason to think that the number of unbelievers, among those to whom the Gospel was first preached, was not altogether so great as is commonly imagined. Besides those who professed Christianity, and those who rejected and opposed it, there were in all probability multitudes between both, neither perfect Christians, nor yet unbelievers; they had a favourable opinion of the Gospel, but worldly considerations made them unwilling to own it. There were many circumstances which inclined them to think that Christianity was a divine revelation, but there were many inconveniences which attended the open profession of it; and they could not find in themselves courage enough to bear them; to disoblige their friends and families, to ruin their fortunes, to lose their reputation, their liberty, and their life, for the sake of this new religion. Therefore they were willing to hope, that if they endeavoured to observe the great precepts of morality, which Christ had represented as the principal part, the sum and substance of religion, if they thought honourably of the Gospel, if they never spake against it, if they offered no injury to the Christians, if they did them all the services that they could safely perform, they were willing to hope that God would accept this, and that he would excuse and forgive the rest.

"The account which we have of those times is very short, but enough is said in the New Testament to show that this supposition is not groundless, and that many thought and acted in this manner; for we are there told that several believed in Christ, but durst not own it, some because they loved the praise of men, others because they feared the Jews, because they would not be put out of the synagogue, others because they would not part with their possessions. Joseph of Arimathea is said to have been secretly his disciple; Nicodemus seems to have had the same disposition; and afterwards Gamaliel, and other Pharisees who op-

posed the persecution and the punishment of the apostles, were probably not a little inclined to Christianity. Thus it was then, and thus it hath been ever since. Truth has had concealed and timorous friends, who, keeping their sentiments to themselves, or disclosing them only to a few, complied with established errors and superstitions, which they disliked and despised. They who are at all acquainted with history know that a[1] great number of such examples might be produced.

"The opposition which the Gospel experienced from the Jews and Gentiles arose principally from their vices. To this cause the Scriptures ascribe their unbelief, and observe that truth is hidden from those who love darkness rather than light, whose deeds are evil, who hate to be reformed, whose minds are carnal and cannot be subject to the law of God, and who have pleasure in unrighteousness. Of such persons it is said, that none of them shall understand."[2]

(3.) A third objection to the prophecies which announce the universality of the Christian religion, is founded on the fact, that a *considerable part of mankind, both in Europe and Asia, now embrace Mohammedism, and receive the Koran of Mohammed as an inspired book: which they would not do if Christianity were really from God.*

Answer. We conceive that the prophecies are fulfilled when all parts of the world shall have *had the offer of Christianity;* but by no means that it shall be upheld among them by a miracle. This is contrary to the whole analogy of nature. God gives increase to the tree, but does not prevent its decay. He gives increase to a man, but does not prevent his growing infirm. Thus religion, when planted in a country, is left to the natural course of things; and if that country grows supine, and does not cherish the blessing, it must take on itself the consequence. We conceive, therefore, that, with regard to all those countries which receive the Koran, where the Gospel once flourished, the prophecy has already been fulfilled. Indeed, their *present* state is an accomplishment of prophecy, inasmuch as it was foretold that *such a falling away should take place.* Not to enter into too minute details, it may be remarked, that the seven churches of Asia lie, *to this very day,* in the same forlorn and desolate condition which the angel had signified to the apostle John (Rev. ii. iii.); *their candlestick* is *removed out of its place,* their churches are turned into mosques, and their worship into the grossest superstition. The prevalence of infidel principles on the Continent is notorious; and equally notorious are the attempts making to disseminate them in

[1] Erasmus, Epist. 583. says, Quid ego potuissem opitulari Luthero, si me periculi comitem fecissem, nisi ut pro uno perirent duo?—Multa quidem præclare et docuit et monuit, atque utinam sua bona malis intolerabilibus non vitiasset! Quod si omnia pie scripsisset, non tamen erat animus ob veritatem capite periclitari. Non omnes ad martyrium satis habent roboris. Vereor, ne, si quid inciderit tumultûs, Petrum sim imitaturus.

Father Paul, being asked by a friend how he could hold communion with the church of Rome, replied *Deus non dedit mihi spiritum Lutheri.* See Burnet's Life of Bedell, p. 16. and Bayle's Dict. art. Weidnerus.

[2] Jortin's Discourses on the Christian Religion, disc. i. pp. 91—94. In the preceding part of that discourse, the learned author has discussed, *at length,* the causes of the rejection of Christianity by the Gentiles, which we have necessarily treated with brevity. That "No valid Argument can be drawn from the Incredulity of the Heathen Philosophers against the Truth of the Christian Religion," has been proved by Mr. J. A. Jeremie, in his Norrisian Prize Essay, Cambridge, 1826. 8vo.

this highly favoured country. Yet *all these countries have had the Gospel,* and if they should hereafter expel it, as the French did towards the close of the eighteenth century, it will be their own fault. The prophecy *has been* fulfilled.

The opposers of revelation have not failed to contrast the rapid progress of Mohammedism with the propagation of Christianity; and have urged it as an argument, to show that there was nothing miraculous in the extension of the religion of Jesus. But, in making this assertion, they have either not known, or have designedly *suppressed,* the connections and means of assistance which favoured Mohammed, and which leave nothing wonderful in the success of his doctrine. That success, however, is satisfactorily accounted for by the religious, political, and civil state of the East at the time the pseudo-prophet of Arabia announced his pretensions, and by the nature of his doctrine, as well as by the means to which he had recourse for its propagation.

Mohammed came into the world exactly at the time suited to his purposes, when its political and civil state was most favourable to a new conqueror.

In Arabia Felix, religion was at that time in a most deplorable state. Its inhabitants were divided into four religious parties, some of whom were attached to the idolatrous worship of the Sabians, who adored the stars as divinities; while others followed the idolatry of the Magi, who worshipped fire. The Jewish religion had a great many followers, who treated the others with much cruelty; and the Christians who were at that time resident there, formed principally an assemblage of different sects, who had taken refuge among this free people because they were not tolerated in the Roman empire. Among the Christian sects in the eastern part of the empire, bitter dissensions and cruel animosities prevailed, which filled great part of the East with carnage, assassinations, and such detestable enormities, as rendered the very name of Christianity odious to many. The pure doctrines and holy precepts of the Gospel had been degraded into superstitious idolatry; and the decay of morality in every class had kept equal pace with that of piety. Under such a distracted state of religion, it would have been highly wonderful if, in a short time, Mohammed had not procured a numerous train of followers. The Christian religion, on the contrary, received its origin in a country where the only true God was worshipped, and the Mosaic ceremonial law (which it abrogated) was universally revered.

If the corruptions and distresses of Christianity were thus signally favourable to the aspiring views of Mohammed, the political state of the world at that time contributed not less remarkably to the success of the impostor. While the once formidable empires of Rome, on the one hand, overwhelmed by the fierce incursions of the northern barbarians, and of Persia, on the other, distracted by its own intestine divisions, were evidently in the last state of decay, Arabia was in every respect prosperous and flourishing. Naturally populous in itself, it had received a very considerable accession of inhabitants from the Grecian empire; whence religious intolerance had driven great numbers of Jews and Christians to seek an asylum in a country, where

they might enjoy their opinions without interruption, and profess them without danger. The Arabians were a free but illiterate people, not devoted like other nations to the extravagances of sensual pleasures, but temperate and hardy, and therefore properly qualified for new conquests. This brave people were at that time divided into separate tribes, each independent of the other, and consequently connected by no political union, — a circumstance that greatly facilitated the conquests of Mohammed. The pseudo-prophet himself was descended from a family of much power and consequence; and, by a fortunate marriage with an opulent widow, was raised, from indigent circumstances, to be one of the richest men in Mecca. He was, moreover, endowed with fine and politic talents; and from the various journeys which he made in prosecuting his mercantile concerns, had acquired a perfect acquaintance with the constitution of the country. These, added to his high descent and family connections, could not fail of attracting attention and followers to the character of a religious teacher, in an age of ignorance and barbarism. No such advantages of rank, wealth, or powerful connections were possessed by Jesus Christ. Of humble descent, bred up in poverty, he continued in that state all his life, having frequently no place where he could lay his head. A man so circumstanced was not likely, by his own personal influence, to force a new religion, much less a false one, upon the world.

In forming a new religion, Mohammed studied to adapt it to the notions of the four religions that prevailed in Arabia; making its ritual less burthensome, and its morality more indulgent. From the idolatry of the Sabians and Magi, he took the religious observance of Friday, and of the four months in the year, together with various superstitious fables concerning the resurrection of the dead and the last judgment. From the Jews, to whom he announced himself as the Messiah, the conqueror in whom their prophecies centred, he borrowed many tales, particularly concerning angels, numerous purifications and fasts, the prohibition of certain kinds of food, and of usury, and the permission of polygamy, and of capricious divorce. From the jarring and corrupted Christian sects, (to whom he proclaimed himself as the Paraclete or Comforter, that was to accomplish the yet unfulfilled system of revelation,) he derived a variety of doctrinal tenets, both false and true, concerning the divine decrees, the authority of Jesus, and of the evangelists, the resurrection of the body, and the universal judgment of mankind, together with many moral precepts. By this artful compilation he united all the four religions of his country, and thus procured a more easy admittance for his new doctrine.

Further, Mohammed established his religion in such a manner, that it did not excite against itself the passions of men, but on the contrary flattered them in various ways. It was easier to perform certain corporeal ceremonies and purifications, to recite certain prayers, to give alms, to fast, and to undertake pilgrimages to Mecca, than to restrain lusts, to suppress all sinful appetites, and to confine those which are innocent within proper bounds. Such a system of

doctrine, so accommodating to every bad passion, — accompanied by the permission of polygamy and capricious divorce, and by the promise of a full enjoyment of gross sensual pleasures in a future life, — could not fail of procuring him a considerable accession of followers, and in no long time brought the brave and warlike tribes of Arabia under his standard. Far different was the holy and pure doctrine of Christ. He and his apostles strictly forbade all sin, required of all, without exception, the mortification of their most beloved lusts, cancelled the ceremonies of the Jews, and all the foolish superstitions of the heathens. Christ made no allowance, granted no indulgence; and yet his religion has continued to prevail against the strongest corruptions and most inveterate prejudices. Mohammed changed his system of doctrine, and altered his laws and ceremonies, to suit the dispositions of the people. He sometimes established one law and then suppressed it; pretending a divine revelation for both, though they were inconsistent. But Christ was always the same, and his laws were and are invariable. Conscious that his pretended revelation would not bear the test of examination, it is death by one of the laws of Mohammed to contradict the Koran, or to dispute about his religion. The Gospel, on the contrary, was submitted to free inquiry: the more strictly it is examined, the brighter do its evidences appear; and the rude assaults, which at various times have been made against it, have served only to demonstrate its divine origin beyond the possibility of refutation.

"The pretensions of Mohammed were not accompanied by any of those external evidences, which may always be expected to confirm and to distinguish a divine revelation. To miraculous power, that most infallible test of divine interposition, he openly disclaimed every pretence, and even boldly denied its necessity to confirm the mission of a prophet.[1] He deemed it sufficient to appeal to a secret and unattested intercourse with an angel, and, above all, to the inimitable sublimity and excellence of the Koran. To the former of these pretences no serious attention is due; for, instead of affording any evidence in support of the claims of Mohammed, it notoriously wants proofs to establish its own authenticity." With regard to the boasted sublimity and excellence of the Koran, — which, the pseudo-prophet alleged, bore strong and visible characters of an almighty hand, and was designed by God to compensate the want of any miraculous power, — it has been satisfactorily shown not only to be far below the Scriptures, both in the propriety of its images and the force of its descriptions; but its finest passages are acknowledged imitations of them, and, like all imitations, infinitely inferior to the great original.[2] The Moslems in proof of their religion appeal to the plenary and manifest inspiration of the Koran. They rest the divinity of their book upon its inimitable excellence; but instead of holding it to be divine because it is excellent, they believe its excellence because

[1] Hence no credit is due to the miraculous stories related of Mohammed by Abulfeda, who wrote the account *six hundred years* after his death, or which are found in the legend of Al Janabi, who lived *two hundred years* after that event.

[2] Professor White's Bampton Lectures, pp. 241—252.

they admit its divinity. There is nothing in the Koran which affects the feelings, nothing which elevates the imagination, nothing which enlightens the understanding, nothing which improves the heart. In contains no beautiful narrative, no proverbs of wisdom or axioms of morality; it is a chaos of detached sentences, a mass of dull tautology. The spirit which it breathes is in unison with the immoral and absurd tenets which it inculcates, — savage and cruel; forbidding those who embrace the Moslem faith to hold any friendly intercourse with infidels or those who reject it, and commanding them to make war upon the latter. Such is the Koran as *now* extant; but it is well known that it has received alterations, additions, and amendments, by removing some of its absurdities, since it was first compiled by Mohammed.[1] The Christian revelation, on the contrary, remains to this day as it was written by its inspired authors; and the more minutely it is investigated, the more powerfully does it appeal to the hearts and minds of all who examine it with honesty and impartiality.

Of the prophetic spirit of Mohammed, we have this solitary instance. When he went to visit one of his wives, he says that God revealed to him what she desired to say to him: he approved of one part and rejected the other. When he told his wife what was in her will to speak to him, she demanded of him who had revealed it to him? "He that knoweth all things," said Mohammed, "hath revealed it to me, that ye may be converted; your hearts are inclined to do what is forbidden. If ye act any thing against the prophet, know that God is his protector." There is not a single circumstance to render this relation credible.

Such were the circumstances that contributed to promote the success of Mohammedism; circumstances that in no degree appertained to the origin of Christianity. During the first *seven* years, indeed, when the Arabian impostor used only persuasion, and confined his exertions to Mecca, it appears that he could reckon no more converts than eighty-three men and eighteen women. Contrast with this the rapid spread of Christianity during the same period.[2] But no sooner was he enabled to assemble a party sufficient to support his ambitious designs, than he threw off the mask, which was no longer necessary; and, disclaiming the softer arts of persuasion and reasoning, immediately adopted a quicker and more efficacious mode of conversion. It was alleged by the deceiver, that, since a disobedient world had disdained or rejected the ineffectual summons, which divine mercy had sent in former times by the prophets, who came with appeals to the senses and reason of mankind; it had now pleased the Almighty to send forth his last great prophet, by the strength of his arm and the power of his sword, to compel men to embrace the truth. A voluptuous paradise and the highest heavens were the rewards of those who fought his battles, or expended their fortunes in his cause; and the courage of his adherents was fortified and sharpened by the doctrine of fatal-

[1] See Koran, ch. ii. pp. 22. 25., ch. iii p. 50., and ch. v. p. 89. Sale's translation, 4to. edit.
[2] See pp. 301—306. *suprà*

ism which he inculcated. From all these combined circumstances, the success of the arms and religion of Mohammed kept equal pace; nor can it excite surprise, when we know the conditions which he proposed to the vanquished. Death or conversion was the only choice offered to idolaters; while to the Jews and Christians was left the somewhat milder alternative of subjection and tribute, if they persisted in their own religion, or of an equal participation in the rights and liberties, the honours and privileges of the faithful, if they embraced the religion of their conquerors.

How different the conduct of Christ! "He employed no other means of converting men to his religion, but persuasion, argument, exhortation, miracles, and prophecies. He made use of no other force, but the force of truth—no other sword, but the sword of the spirit, that is, the word of God. He had no arms, no legions to fight his cause. He was the Prince of peace, and preached peace to all the world. Without power, without support, without any followers, but twelve poor humble men, without one circumstance of attraction, influence, or compulsion, he triumphed over the prejudices, the learning, the religion of his country; over the ancient rites, idolatry, and superstition, over the philosophy, wisdom, and authority of the whole Roman empire. Wherever Mohammedism has penetrated, it has carried despotism, barbarism, and ignorance[1]; wherever Christianity has spread, it has produced the most beneficial effects on nations and individuals, in the diffusion of knowledge, in morals, religion, governments, in social and personal happiness."[2]

The *continued* prevalence of this baleful system of religion may be satisfactorily accounted for by the profound ignorance of the nature of the human heart, in which Mohammedism leaves its votaries,—the want of right moral feeling, which accompanies inveterate and universal ignorance,—the vices in which it allows its professors to live, and the climates in which they live,—the chilling despotism of all Mohammedan governments,—and the cunning fraud and extortion which universally prevail in them.[3]

"Let not then the Christian be offended, or the infidel triumph, at the successful establishment and long continuance of so acknowledged an imposture, as affording any reasonable ground of objection against our holy faith. Let these events rather be considered as evidences of its truth,—as accomplishments of the *general* prediction of

[1] "Mohammed established his religion," says the profound Pascal, "by killing others,—Jesus Christ, by making his followers lay down their own lives; Mohammed, by forbidding his law to be read,—Jesus Christ, by commanding us to read. In a word, the two were so opposite, that if Mohammed took the way in all human probability to succeed, Jesus Christ took the way, humanly speaking, to be disappointed. And hence, instead of concluding that because Mohammed succeeded, Jesus might in like manner have succeeded, we ought to infer, that since Mohammed has succeeded, Christianity must have inevitably perished, if it had not been supported by a power altogether divine." Thoughts, p. 197. London, 1806.

[2] And yet, notwithstanding the facts above stated (such are the shifts to which infidelity is driven), it has been asserted by an antagonist of revelation, that "of the two books" (the Bible and the Koran), "*the latter*" (the Koran) "*has the most truths, and a more impressive moral code!!*"

[3] The topics, above hinted, are fully illustrated by Mr. Jowett, in his Christian Researches in the Mediterranean, pp. 247—276.

our Lord, that *false prophets and false Christs should arise, and should deceive many;* and especially of that particular and express prophecy in the revelations of his beloved disciple (Rev. ix. 1. &c.), which has been determined by the ablest commentators to relate to the impostor Mohammed, and to his false and impious religion, which, *arising like a smoke out of the bottomless pit,* suddenly overshadowed the eastern world, and involved its wretched inhabitants in *darkness and in error.*"[1]

(4.) Lastly, it is objected that *Christianity is known only to a small portion of mankind, and that if the Christian revelation came from God, no part of the human race would remain ignorant of it, no understanding would fail to be convinced by it.*

Answer. The opposers of the Christian revelation cannot with propriety urge its non-universality as an objection; for their religion (if the deism, or rather atheism, which they wish to propagate, may be designated by that name) is so very far from being universal, that, for *one* who professes deism, we shall find in the world one thousand who profess Christianity. Besides, we clearly see that many benefits which God has bestowed on men are partial as to the enjoyment. Some are given to particular nations, but denied to the rest of the world; others are possessed by some individuals only, of a favoured nation. A moderate knowledge of history will be sufficient to convince us, that in the moral government of the world, the bounties of Providence, as well as mental endowments, and the means of improvement, are distributed with what appears to us an unequal hand. When the objections to this inequality of distribution are considered and refuted, the objection arising from the partial knowledge of Christianity is answered at the same time.

The subject, however, may be viewed in another light. Some blessings flow immediately from God to every person who enjoys them; others are conveyed by the instrumentality of man, and depend on the philanthropy of man for their continuance and extension. The last is the case as to the knowledge of Christianity. When it was first revealed, it was committed into the hands of the disciples of Jesus; and its propagation in the world ever since has depended on their exertions in publishing it among the nations. That a melancholy negligence has been too often betrayed, must be acknowledged and deplored. But at the same time it will be found, that in numberless instances the most violent opposition has been made to the zealous endeavours of Christians; and that it is owing to the sanguinary persecutions by the rulers of the world, that the Gospel does not now enlighten the whole habitable globe. If a conqueror, followed by his powerful army, desolate a country, and burn the cities and villages, and destroy the cattle and the fields of corn, and the people perish for cold and hunger, is their misery to be ascribed to

[1] White's Bampton Lectures, p. 99.; from which masterly work the preceding sketch of the progress of Mohammedism has been chiefly drawn. Less on the Authenticity of the New Testament, pp. 377—385. Bp. Porteus on the Christian Revelation, proposition viii. See also Bp. Sumner's Evidences of Christianity, chap. vii. on the Wisdom manifested in the Christian Scriptures, compared with the time-serving policy of Mohammed.

a want of goodness in God, or to the superabounding wickedness of man? The answer will equally apply to the subject before us.[1]

But the objection will appear less cogent, when it is considered that Christianity is not the religion of a day, nor of an age; but a scheme of mercy, that gradually attains its triumphs, and which, overcoming all opposition, *will* ultimately be propagated throughout the earth. The most enlightened and best civilised nations of Europe, Asia, and Africa, *have been* blest with the Gospel; and with regard to the others, to whom it has not yet been carried, this favour has been withheld from them, because it is ordained that the spreading of the Gospel should keep pace with the improvements of reason. The wisdom of this appointment is evident. Revelation is most properly bestowed after the weakness of human reason, in its best state, has been demonstrated by experience. Besides, it would not have answered the design intended to be produced by the Gospel, if it had been universally spread at the beginning. The conceptions which the converted heathens formed of the true religion were necessarily very imperfect: hence sprang the great corruptions of Christianity which so early prevailed. Had the Christian religion been universally propagated in the first ages, it would have been diffused in an imperfect form. Nor is this all. The partial propagation of the Gospel, with the other objections that have been brought against Christianity, having rendered its divine original a matter of dispute, the tendency of these disputes has been to separate the wheat from the chaff (which at the beginning necessarily mixed itself with the Gospel), and to make Christians draw their religion from the Scriptures alone. It is thus that Christianity, in the course of ages, will acquire its genuine form. Then, also, it will be surrounded with the greatest lustre of evidence; and although, for the reason just stated, the Gospel has hitherto been confined to comparatively a few countries, yet we are assured that in due time it will be offered to them all, and will be diffused over the whole earth, with all its attendant blessings. The predictions of the prophets, of Christ, and his apostles, relative to the extension of the Gospel, expressly announce that it is to be thus progressively diffused, and that it will finally triumph, when *the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.* (Isa. xi. 9.) Through the divine blessing on the labours of hundreds of faithful missionaries, who have been and are now employed in carrying the Gospel into all lands, WE SEE great advances *actually made* in spreading Christianity; and we doubt not but the Gospel will be planted, agreeably to the divine predictions, in all the vast continents of Africa, Asia, America, and in the islands of Austral Asia.

The sincerity and piety of fallible men, it is true, can never do justice to the means which God has graciously vouchsafed; and it will always be a real grief to good men, that, among many, there exists little more than the name of Christian. But the advocates of Christianity do not pretend that its evidence is so irresistible, that no understanding can fail of being convinced by it; nor do they deny it

[1] Bogue's Essay on the Divine Authority of the New Testament, p 235.

to have been within the compass of divine power to have communicated to the world a higher degree of assurance, and to have given to his communication a stronger and more extensive influence. But the not having *more* evidence is not a sufficient reason for rejecting that which we already have. If such evidence were *irresistible*, it would restrain the voluntary powers too much, to answer the purpose of trial and probation: it would call for no exercise of candour, seriousness, humility, inquiry; no submission of passions, interests, and prejudices, to moral evidence, and to probable truth; no habits of reflection; none of that previous desire to learn and to obey the will of God, which forms the test of the virtuous principle, and which induces men to attend with care and reverence to every credible intimation of that will, and to resign present advantages and present pleasures to every reasonable expectation of propitiating his favour. "Men's moral probation may be, whether they will take due care to inform themselves by *impartial* consideration; and, afterwards, whether they will act as the case requires upon the evidence which they have. And this, we find by experience, is often our probation, in our temporal capacity."[1]

Further, if the evidence of the Gospel were irresistible, it would leave no place for the admission of *internal evidence*[2]; which ought to bear a considerable part in the proof of every revelation, because it is a species of evidence which applies itself to the knowledge, love, and practice of virtue, and which operates in proportion to the degree of those qualities which it finds in the person whom it addresses. Men of *good* dispositions, among Christians, are greatly affected by the impression which the Scriptures themselves make on their minds; and their conviction is much strengthened by these impressions. It is likewise true that they who sincerely act, or sincerely endeavour to act, *according* to what they believe, that is, according to the just result of the probabilities (or, if the reader please, the possibilities), in natural and revealed religion, which they themselves perceive, and according to a rational estimate of consequences, and, above all, according to the just effect of those principles of gratitude and devotion, which even the view of nature generates in a well ordered mind, *seldom fail of proceeding further.* This also may have been exactly what was designed.[3] On the contrary, where any persons never set themselves heartily and in earnest to be informed in religion,—or who secretly wish it may *not* prove true, and who are *less* attentive to evidence than to difficulties, and *more* attentive to objections than to what has long since been most satisfactorily said in answer to them;—such persons can scarcely be thought in a likely way of seeing the evidence of religion, though it were most certainly true, and capable of being ever so fully proved. "If any accustom themselves to consider this subject usually in the way of mirth and

[1] Butler's Analogy, part ii. chap. vi. p. 227. The whole of that chapter, which treats on the objection now under consideration, will abundantly repay the trouble of a *diligent* perusal.

[2] This sort of evidence is fully stated in the following chapter.

[3] Paley's Evidences, vol ii. pp. 340—352.

sport; if they attend to forms and representations, and inadequate manners of expression, instead of the real things intended by them (for signs often can be no more than inadequately expressive of the things signified); or if they substitute human errors, in the room of divine truth; why may not all, or any of these things, hinder some men from seeing that evidence which really is seen by others; as a like turn of mind, with respect to matters of common speculation and practice, does, we find, by experience, hinder them from attaining that knowledge and right understanding, in matters of common speculation and practice, which more fair and attentive minds attain to? And the effect will be the same, whether their neglect of seriously considering the evidence of religion, and their indirect behaviour with regard to it, proceed from mere carelessness, or from the grosser vices; or whether it be owing to this, that forms and figurative manners of expression, as well as errors, administer occasions of ridicule, when the things intended, and the truth itself, would not. Men may indulge a ludicrous turn so far, as to lose all sense of conduct and prudence in worldly affairs, and even, as it seems, to impair their faculty of reason. And, in general, levity, carelessness, passion, and prejudice, *do* hinder us from being rightly informed, with respect to common things; and they *may*, in like manner, and perhaps in some farther providential manner, with respect to moral and religious subjects, hinder evidence from being laid before us, and from being seen when it is. The Scripture[1] does declare, that every one *shall not understand.* And it makes no difference, by what providential conduct this comes to pass: whether the evidence of Christianity was, originally and with design, put and left so, as that those who are desirous of evading moral obligations should not see it, and that honest-minded persons should; or, whether it come to pass by any other means."[2] *Now*, that Christianity has been established in the world, and is still spreading in all directions, God does not work miracles to *make* men religious; he only sets the truth before them, as rational and accountable beings. It was and is the merciful design of God, not to condemn the world, but to save it,—even to save all, without exception, who will listen to the overtures of his Gospel. He that believes and obeys the Gospel shall not finally be condemned, but will obtain a complete pardon: while, on the other hand, he who *wilfully* rejects this last great offer of salvation to mankind, must expect the consequence. And *the ground of his condemnation* is, that such a person *chooses* to remain ignorant, rather than to submit himself to the teachings of this heavenly revelation. *Light* (Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, the fountain of light and

[1] Dan. xii. 10. See also Isa. xxix. 13, 14.; Matt. vi. 23. and xi. 25. and xiii. 11, 12.; John iii. 19., v. 44.; 1 Cor. ii. 14. and 2 Cor. iv. 4.; 2 Tim. iii. 13., and that affectionate as well as authoritative admonition, so very many times inculcated, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.* Grotius saw so strongly the thing intended in these, and other passages of Scripture of the like sense, as to say, that the proof given to us of Christianity was less than it might have been for this very purpose: Ut ita sermo evangelii tanquam lapis esset Lydius ad quem ingenia sanabilia explorarentur. De Ver. Rel. Christ. lib. ii. towards the end.

[2] Butler's Analogy, part ii. ch. vi. pp. 272, 273.

life) *is come into the world* (diffusing his benign influences every where, and favouring men with a clear and full revelation of the divine will); *and* yet *men have loved darkness rather than light,* have preferred sin to holiness:—and why? *Because their deeds were evil.* The bad man avoids the truth which condemns him; while the good man seeks it, as the ground-work and proof of his actions.[1]

It were no difficult task to adduce other examples of the fulfilment of prophecy, if the limits necessarily assigned to this section would permit: we shall therefore add but two more instances in illustration of the evidence from prophecy.

The first is, the long apostasy and general corruption of the professors of Christianity, so plainly foretold, and under such express and particular characters, in the apostolic writings; which, all the world may see, has been abundantly fulfilled in the Church of Rome. Who that had lived in those days, when Christianity was struggling under all the incumbent weight of Jewish bigotry and pagan intolerance and persecution, could from the state of things have possibly conjectured that a rising sect, every where spoken against, would ever have given birth to a tyrant, who would *oppose and exalt himself* above all laws, human and divine, *sitting as God in the temple of God,* and claiming and swaying a sceptre of universal spiritual empire? Who, that beheld the low estate of the Christian church in the first age of its existence, could ever have divined that a remarkable character would one day arise out of it, who should establish a vast monarchy, whose coming should be *with all power, and signs, and lying wonders* (pretended miracles), *and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,* commanding the worship of demons, angels, or departed saints; *forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats?* In short, we see the characters of *the beast, and the false prophet,* and *the harlot of Babylon,* now exemplified in every particular, and in a city that is seated upon seven mountains: so that, if the pontiff of Rome had sat for his picture, a more accurate likeness could not have been drawn.[2] The existence of these monstrous corruptions of the purity and simplicity of the Gospel, which no human penetration could have foreseen, is a great confirmation and standing monument of the truth of the Gospel, and demonstrates the divine inspiration of those persons who wrote these books, and circumstantially predicted future events and future corruptions of religion, infinitely beyond the reach of all conception and discernment merely *human.*

[1] The topics above considered are ably discussed and illustrated in various other points of view, in (Mr. now Bp.) Lonsdale's three discourses, intitled "Some popular Objections against Christianity considered, and the general Character of Unbelief represented." 8vo. London. 1820.

[2] On the New Testament prophecies respecting the papal antichrist (as well as those of Daniel), see Bp. Newton's Dissertations, vol. ii.; Bp. Hurd's Introduction to Prophecy, sermons 7. and 8. (Works, vol. v. pp. 171—232.); Kett on Prophecy, vol. ii. pp. 1—61. A compendious view of these predictions may also be seen in Macknight's Truth of the Gospel History, pp. 576—600. Full illustrations of Paul's prediction respecting the papal antichrist, in 2 Thess. ii. 1—12. will be found in Dr. Benson's Dissertation in his paraphrase and notes upon St. Paul's Epistles, reprinted in the fifth volume of Bp. Watson's Collection of Theological Tracts; and in Dr. M. O'Sullivan's Treatise "Of the Apostasy predicted by St. Paul." Dublin. 1842. 8vo.

The other instance alluded to, is the *present* spread of infidelity, in various parts of the professedly Christian world, the efforts of which to subvert the Christian faith (we know) will ultimately be in vain, "for the gates of hell shall not prevail" against the church of Christ. Among the various signs of the *last days*, that is, during the continuance of the Messiah's kingdom, or the prevalence of Christianity in the world, it is foretold that "*there shall come scoffers and mockers, walking after their own lusts, who separate themselves* by apostasy, *sensual, not having the spirit, lovers of their ownselves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.*" (2 Pet. iii. 3.; Jude 18, 19.; 2 Tim. iii. 2—5.) These predictions point out the true source of all infidelity, and of men's motives for scoffing at religion.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is pure and holy; it requires holiness of heart and of life, and enjoins submission to civil government as an ordinance of God. The safety of all states depends upon religion; it ministers to social order, confers stability upon government and laws, and gives security to property. "Religion, unfeignedly loved, perfecteth men's abilities unto all kinds of virtuous services in the commonwealth;" while infidelity, immorality, and sedition usually go hand in hand. In the present state of the world, infidelity is closely allied with the revolutionary question; and, generally speaking, those who are eager to revolutionise *all* existing governments, under the ostensible pretence of promoting the liberty and prosperity of mankind, are alike infidels in precept and in practice. The one is a necessary consequence of the other, for scepticism subverts the whole foundation of morals; it not only tends to corrupt the moral taste, but also promotes the growth of vanity, ferocity, and licentiousness.[1] Hence, presumptuous and impatient of subordination, these "scoffers" and "mockers" wish to follow the impulse of their own lusts and depraved passions, and consequently hate the salutary moral restraints imposed by the Gospel. "The religion of Christ is a code of laws as well as a system of doctrines; a rule of practice as well as of faith. It has certain conditions inseparably connected with the belief of it, to which there is but too often a great unwillingness to submit. Belief, to be reasonable and consistent, must include obedience; and hence arises the main objection to it. Cherishing unchristian dispositions and passions in their bosoms, and very frequently also devoted to unchristian practices which they will not consent to abandon, — men pretend to decide upon the evidences of a religion from which they have little to hope and much to fear, if it be true." Therefore, they labour to prove that the Gospel is not true, in order that they

[1] The topics above alluded to are illustrated with unequalled argument and eloquence by the Rev. Robert Hall, in his discourse on Modern Infidelity, considered with respect to its influence on society. The experience of more than forty years, which have elapsed since that discourse was delivered, has confirmed the truth of *every one* of the preacher's observations.

may rid themselves of its injunctions; and, to save themselves the trouble of a fair and candid examination, they copy and re-assert, without acknowledgment, the oft-refuted objections of former opposers of revelation. And, as ridiculing religion is the most likely way to depreciate truth in the sight of the unreflecting multitude, scoffers, having no solid argument to produce against revelation, endeavour to burlesque some parts of it, and falsely charge others with being contradictory; they then affect to laugh at it, and get superficial thinkers to laugh with them. At length they succeed in persuading themselves that it is a forgery, and then throw the reins loose on the neck of their evil propensities. The history of revolutionary France, — the avowed contempt of religion, morbid insensibility to morals, desecrated sabbaths[1], and abandonment to amusements the most frivolous and dissipating, which still prevail in that country, as well as on other parts of the Continent,— the rapid strides with which infidelity is advancing in various parts of the world, and the efforts which at this time are making to disseminate the same deadly principles among every class of society in our own country, — are all so many confirmations of the truth of the New Testament prophecies. But the spirit which predicted these events is the very same which was poured out upon the apostles, and enlightened their minds with the knowledge of the Gospel; therefore the apostles, who wrote the New Testament, had the spirit of God, and were enlightened by it.

The preceding instances of prophecy and its accomplishment are only a few, in comparison of those which might have been adduced; but they are abundantly sufficient to satisfy every candid and sincere investigator of the evidences of divine revelation, that the writings which contain them could only be composed under divine inspiration; because they relate to events so various, so distant, and so contingent, that no human foresight could by any possibility predict them. The argument from prophecy is, indeed, not to be formed from the consideration of single prophecies, but from *all* the prophecies taken together, and considered as making one system; in which, from the mutual connection and dependence of its parts, preceding prophecies prepare and illustrate those which follow, and these again reflect light on the foregoing: just as in any philosophical system, that which shows the solidity of it, is the harmony and consistency of the whole, not the application of it in particular instances. Hence, though the evidence be but small, from the completion of any one prophecy taken separately, yet that evidence being always something, the amount of the whole evidence resulting from a great number of prophecies, all relative to the same design, is very considerable; like many scattered rays, which, though each be weak in itself, yet, concentred into one point, shall form a strong light, and strike the senses very powerfully. This evidence is not simply a growing evidence,

[1] Soon after the return of Louis XVIII. to the throne of his ancestors, the French compelled him to repeal his decree for enforcing a more decent observance of the Lord's day, or Sunday.

but is, indeed, multiplied upon us from the number of reflected lights, which the several component parts of such a system reciprocally throw upon each; till at length the conviction rises into a high degree of moral certainty.[1]

V. OBJECTIONS have been made to the darkness and uncertainty of prophecy; but they arise from not duly considering its manner and design. The *language* has been assigned as one cause of its obscurity, and the *indistinctness of its representation* as another, but with how little reason or propriety the following considerations will evince.

ANSWER.— 1. As prophecy is a peculiar species of writing, it is natural to expect a peculiarity in the LANGUAGE of which it makes use. Sometimes it employs plain terms, but most commonly figurative signs. It has symbols of its own, which are common to all the prophets; but it is not on this account to be considered as a riddle. The symbols are derived from the works of creation and providence, from the history of the Jews, and of the nations with whom they were most closely connected, or by whom they were most violently opposed. These symbols have their rules of interpretation, as uniform and as certain as any other kind of language: and whoever applies his mind with patience and attention to the subject will be able to understand the general scheme of prophecy, and the colour of the events foretold, whether prosperous or calamitous; though he may be utterly unable to discover to what person, or precise time and place, they are to be applied.

2. With regard to the alleged objection, of want of clearness in prophecy, arising from an INDISTINCT REPRESENTATION OF THE EVENT, it should be remembered that, if some prophecies be obscure, others are clear: the latter furnish a proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures; the former contain nothing against it. In many instances, the obscurity is accounted for, from the extensive grasp of prophecy. Some predictions were to have their accomplishment in the early ages of the church, and were peculiarly designed for the benefit of those to whom they were immediately delivered; on which account they were more plain. This remark applies more particularly to the prophecies contained in the New Testament. There are other predictions, designed for the benefit of those who lived in after ages, particularly the middle ages. To the first Christians these were obscure; but when the time advanced towards their accomplishment, the veil was gradually drawn aside, and they were more clearly seen, and better understood. Another class of predictions looked forward to the latter ages of the church. These appeared obscure both to the first Christians and to those who lived in the middle ages: but when that generation appeared for whose use it was the Divine Will that they should be left on record, light began to shine upon them; and the minds of men were awakened to look out for their accomplishment in some great events, which would display the glory of God, and advance the hap-

[1] Bp. Hurd's Introduction to the Study of Prophecy. (Works, vol. v. p. 39.)

piness of his servants. In this way the alleged obscurity of many prophecies will be accounted for.

3. Another reason for throwing a veil over the face of prophecy, whether by its peculiar symbols or by a dark representation, will appear, on considering the NATURE OF THE SUBJECT. Some of the events predicted are of such a nature, that the fate of nations depends upon them; and they are to be brought into existence by the instrumentality of men. If the prophecies had been delivered in plainer terms, some persons would have endeavoured to hasten their accomplishment, as others would have attempted to defeat it: nor would the actions of men appear so free, or the Providence of God so conspicuous in their completion. "The obscurity of prophecy was further necessary to prevent the Old Testament economy from sinking too much in the estimation of those who lived under it. It served merely to erect the expectation of better things to come, without indisposing men from the state of discipline and improvement which was designed to prepare for futurity. The whole Jewish dispensation was a kind of prophecy, which had both an immediate and ultimate end. It immediately separated the Jews from the other nations, and preserved the holy oracles, committed to their custody, from being corrupted by idolatrous intercourse; and it ultimately maintained the hope of the Messias and his reign. The illustration of this view of the ancient Jewish law and constitution is the subject of the epistles to the Galatians and Hebrews; — that "the law was a schoolmaster to lead men to Christ" — "that it was the shadow of good things to come, but the body was Christ."

"The dispensation of prophecy appears to have been accommodated with great wisdom to the state of the church in every age, to comfort the people of God and to confirm their faith, according as they and the state of religion required it. On Adam's fall, on Abraham's separation from an idolatrous world, on the dispensation of the new economy by Moses, on the Babylonish captivity, and on the commencement of Christianity, prophecies were communicated with a growing light; and they will become more and more luminous with the progress of events to the end of the world."[1]

But though some parts of the prophetic Scripture are obscure enough to exercise the church, yet others are sufficiently clear to illuminate it; and the more the obscure parts are fulfilled, the better they are understood. In the present form of prophecy men are left entirely to themselves; and they fulfil the prophecies without intending, or thinking, or knowing that they do so. The accomplishment strips off the veil; and the evidence of prophecy appears in all its splendour. Time, that detracts something from the evidence of other writers, is still adding something to the credit and authority of the prophets. Future ages will comprehend more than the present, as the present understands more than the past; and the perfect accomplishment will produce a perfect knowledge of all the prophecies.

[1] Dr. Ranken's Institutes, p. 350.

Men are sometimes apt to think that, if they could but see a miracle wrought in favour of religion, they would readily resign all their scruples, believe without doubt, and obey without reserve. The very thing which is thus desired we have. We have the greatest and most striking of miracles in the series of Scripture prophecies already accomplished: — accomplished, as we have seen, in the present state of the Arabians, Jews, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Tyre, Nineveh, Babylon, the four great monarchies, the seven churches of Asia, Jerusalem, the corruptions of the church of Rome, &c. &c. "And this is not a transient miracle, ceasing almost as soon as performed; but is permanent, and protracted through the course of many generations. It is not a miracle delivered only upon the report of others, but is subject to our own inspection and examination. It is not a miracle delivered only upon the report of others, but is open to the observation and contemplation of all mankind; and after so many ages is still growing, — still improving to future ages. What stronger miracle, therefore, can we require for our conviction? Or what will avail if this be found ineffectual? If we reject the evidence of prophecy, neither would we be persuaded though one rose from the dead. What can be plainer? We see, or may see, with our own eyes, the Scripture prophecies accomplished; and if the Scripture prophecies are accomplished, the Scripture must be the Word of God; and if the Scripture is the Word of God, the Christian Religion must be true."[1]

CHAP. V.

INTERNAL EVIDENCES OF THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

THE arguments from miracles and prophecy contained in the preceding chapter, form what has been termed the *external evidence* that the Scriptures are the inspired Word of God; and without seeking for additional testimony, we might safely rest the divine authority of the Bible on those proofs. There are, however, several *internal evidences,* which, though not so obviously striking as miracles and prophecy, come home to the consciences and judgments of every person whether learned or illiterate, and leave infidels in every situation without excuse. These internal evidences are, the sublime doctrines and the purity of the moral precepts revealed in the Scriptures, — the harmony subsisting between every part, — their miraculous preservation, — and the tendency of the whole to promote the present and eternal happiness of mankind, as evinced by the blessed effects which are invariably produced by a cordial reception and belief of the Bible,— together with the peculiar advantages possessed by the Christian Revelation over all other religions.

[1] Bp. Newton on Prophecy, vol. ii. pp. 412—416. Bogue on the Divine Authority of the New Testament, pp. 169—171.

SECT. I.

THE SYSTEM OF DOCTRINE, AND THE MORAL PRECEPTS, WHICH ARE DELIVERED IN THE SCRIPTURES, ARE SO EXCELLENT, AND SO PERFECTLY HOLY, THAT THE PERSONS WHO PUBLISHED THEM TO THE WORLD MUST HAVE DERIVED THEM FROM A PURER AND MORE EXALTED SOURCE THAN THEIR OWN MEDITATIONS.

NOTHING false or immoral can be taught by a God of truth and holiness. Accordingly, the account of the Almighty and of his perfections, and the moral precepts which are contained in the Scriptures, commend themselves to our reason, as worthy of the highest and most excellent of all beings. In order, however, that we may form a just and correct idea of the doctrines and duties of religion, which are offered to our consideration in the Bible, it will be necessary to take a brief view of them from the beginning. The sacred volume opens with that which lies at the foundation of religion, — an account of the creation of the world by the Almighty, which is there described in a plain and familiar manner, accommodated to the capacities of man, and with a noble simplicity; together with the original formation of man, who is represented as having been created after the divine image, invested with dominion over the inferior creation (but with a reservation of the obedience which he himself owed to God as his sovereign Lord), and constituted in a paradisaical state, — a happy state of purity and innocence. (Gen. i. ii.) In this account there is nothing but what is agreeable to right reason, as well as to the most ancient traditions which have obtained among the nations. We are further informed that man fell from that state by sinning against his Maker [1], and that sin brought death into the world, together with all the miseries to which the human race is now obnoxious; but that the merciful Parent of our being, in his great goodness and compassion, was pleased to

[1] The particular injunction, which (Moses tells us) was laid upon our first parents, not to eat of the fruit of a particular tree (Gen. ii. 17.), has been a favourite subject of sneer and cavil with the opposers of revelation. A little consideration, however, will show that it had nothing in it unbecoming the supreme wisdom and goodness. For, since God was pleased to constitute man lord of this inferior creation, and had given him so large a grant and so many advantages, it was manifestly proper that he should require some particular instance of homage and fealty, to be a memorial to man of his dependence, and an acknowledgment on his part that he was under the dominion of a higher Lord, to whom he owed the most absolute subjection and obedience. And what instance of homage could be more proper, circumstanced as man then was, than his being obliged, in obedience to the divine command, to abstain from one or more of the fruits of paradise? It pleased God to insist only upon his abstaining from one, at the same time that he indulged him in full liberty as to all the rest; and this served both as an act of homage to the Supreme Lord, from whose bountiful grant he held paradise and all its enjoyments, and was also fitted to teach our first parents a noble and useful lesson of abstinence and self-denial, — one of the most necessary lessons in a state of probation; and also of unreserved submission to the authority and will of God, and an implicit resignation to the supreme wisdom and goodness. It tended to habituate them to keep their sensitive appetite in subjection to the law of reason; to take them off from too close an attachment to inferior sensible good, and to engage them to place their highest happiness in God alone; and, finally, to keep their desire after knowledge within just bounds, so as to be content with knowing what was really proper and useful for them to know, and not presume to pry with an unwarrantable curiosity into things which did not belong to them, and which God had not thought fit to reveal. Leland's View of the Deistical Writers, vol. ii. pp. 144, 145. The objection here briefly answered is fully treated and refuted by the same learned writer in his Answer to Christianity as old as the Creation, vol. ii. ch. 15.

make such revelations and discoveries of his grace and mercy, as laid a proper foundation for the faith and hope of his offending creatures, and for the exercise of religion towards him. (Gen. iii.) Accordingly, the religion delivered in the Scriptures is the religion of man in his lapsed state; and every one who *impartially* and carefully investigates and considers it, will find that one scheme of religion and of moral duty, substantially the same, is carried throughout the whole, till it was brought to its full perfection and accomplishment by Jesus Christ. This religion may be considered principally under three periods, viz. the religion of the patriarchal times, — the doctrines and precepts of the Mosaic dispensation, — and the doctrines and precepts of the Christian Revelation.[1]

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§ 1. *A concise View of the Religion of the Patriarchal Times.*

I. The book of Genesis exhibits to us a clear idea of the Patriarchal Theology. We learn from it that God is the *creator* of all things (i.), as well as the *governor* of all things, by his general and particular providence (xiv. 19., xlv. 5. 7, 8., l. 20., xxii. 8. 13, 14.); that he is *everlasting* (xxi. 33.); *omniscient*, for none but God can know all things, whether past or future (iii. 8—10., xv. 3—16., xviii. 18. compared with Exod. i. 7.); *true* (Gen. vi. 7. compared with vii., xvii. 20. compared with xxv. 16., xxviii. 15. compared with xxxii. 10.); *almighty* (xvii. 1., xviii. 14., xxxv. 11.); *holy and just* (xviii. 25. with xix.); *kind* (xxiv. 12.); *supreme* (xiv. 19.); *merciful* (xxxii. 10.); and *long-suffering* (vi. 3.); gracious towards those who fear him (vi. 8.); and that, though he sometimes tries them (xxii. 1.), yet he is always with them (xxvi. 3., xxviii. 15., xxxix. 2, 3. 21, 22.), and has an especial regard for them. (xv. 1., xviii. 17. 26—32., xix. 22., xx. 6., xxv. 21., xxvi. 12., xxviii. 15., xxix. 32., xxxi. 42.) We learn further that God is *not* the author of sin (i. 31.); and that, since the fall, man is born prone to evil. (vi. 5. viii. 21.) The patriarchs cherished a hope of the pardoning mercy of God towards penitent sinners (iv. 7.), and confided in him, as the judge of all the earth (xviii. 25.), and the great rewarder of them that diligently seek him; which reward they expected, not merely in this

[1] To avoid unnecessary repetitions of references to authorities, the reader is informed that (besides the authors incidentally cited for some particular topics) the following sections are drawn up from a careful examination of Dr. Leland's View of the Deistical Writers, vol. ii. pp. 377—416., and his incomparable work on the Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, 2 vols. 8vo.; Bp. Gibson's Pastoral Letters, 12mo.; Dr. Randolph's Discourses, intitled "The Excellency of the Jewish Law Vindicated," in the second volume of his "View of our Blessed Saviour's Ministry," &c.; the Encyclopædia Biblica of Alstedius, 8vo. Francofurti, 1625; Mr. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ; Dr. Graves's Lectures on the Pentateuch; the Collection of the Boylean Lectures; Abbadie, Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tome ii.; and Vernet, Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tomes ii. iii. See also Mr. T. Erskine's Remarks on the Internal Evidence of Christianity (London, 1821, 12mo.); which "are written with unction and eloquence, and are designed chiefly to show that the doctrines of the Gospel are taught not abstractly, but by facts on which they are grounded; that they are thus more easily apprehended and retained, and produce a more powerful effect on the mind and conduct; that they remove every obstruction out of the way of our access to God; they encourage our attachment to him, and stimulate us to serve him by a holy obedience. In a word, their object is, to bring the character of man into harmony with the character of God." (Dr. Ranken's Institutes of Theology, p. 330.)

present evil world, but in a future state: for we are told that *they sought a better country, that is, an heavenly.* (v. 22. 24. compared with Heb. xi. 5., xxviii. 13. compared with Matt. xxii. 31, 32., and xxv. 8. compared with Heb. xi. 10. 14—16.) To the preceding points we may add, that a hope was cherished from the beginning, originally founded on a divine promise of a great Saviour, who was to deliver mankind from the miseries and ruin to which they were exposed, and through whom God was to make the fullest discoveries of his grace and mercy towards the human race, and to raise them to a high degree of glory and felicity. (iii. 15., xii. 3., xvii. 19., xxii. 18., xxvi. 4., xlix. 10.)

II. These were the chief principles of the Religion of the Patriarchs, who were animated by a strong sense of their obligation to the practice of piety, virtue, and universal righteousness. They held that it was the duty of man to fear God (xxii. 12., xxxi. 53., xlii. 18.); to bless him for mercies received (xiv. 20., xxiv. 27. 52.); and to supplicate him with profound humility (xvii. 18., xviii. 22. *et seq.*, xxiv. 12—14.): that the knowledge of God is to be promoted (xii. 8., xxi. 33.); vows made to him are to be performed (xxviii. 20., xxxv. 1—3.); and that idolatry is to be renounced. (xxxv. 2—4.) With regard to the external rites of religion, the most ancient on record is that of offering sacrifice to God (iii. 21., iv. 3, 4., viii. 20, 21.); and its having so early and universally obtained among all nations, and in the most ancient times, as a sacred rite of religion, cannot be otherwise accounted for, than by supposing it to have been a part of the primitive religion, originally enjoined by divine appointment to the first ancestors of the human race, and from them transmitted to their descendants. The Sabbath also appears to have been observed by the patriarchs. There is, indeed, no direct mention of it *before* the deluge: but, after that catastrophe, it is evident that the observance of it was familiar to Noah; for he is represented twice as waiting *seven* days between his three emissions of the dove. (viii. 10. 12.) And if Noah was acquainted with the consecration of the Sabbath, his ancestors could not have been ignorant of it.

III. The Moral Duties between man and man are likewise clearly announced, either by way of precept or by example: more particularly the duties of children to honour their parents (ix. 23, 24.), and of parents to instil religious principles into the minds of their offspring, and to set them a good example (xviii. 19.); and of servants to obey their masters. (xvi. 9.) Wars may be waged in a *good* cause. (xiv. 14—20.) Anger is a sin in the sight of God (iv. 5, 6.); strifes are to be avoided (xiii. 8, 9.), murder is prohibited (iv. 8—12. 15., ix. 6.); hospitality to be exercised (xviii. 1., xix. 1.), and also forgiveness of injuries. (l. 18—20.) Matrimony is appointed by God (i. 28., ii. 18. 21—24.), from whom a virtuous wife is to be sought by prayer (xxiv. 7. 12.); and a wife is to be subject to her husband. (iii. 16.) All improper alliances, however, are to be avoided. (vi. 1, 2.) Children are the gift of God (iv. 1., xxv. 21., xxx. 2. 22.); and adultery and all impurity are to be avoided. (xx. 3. 7. 9., xxxix. 9., xxxiv. 7., xxxviii. 9.)[1]

[1] Moldenhawer, Introd. in Libros Canonicos Vet. et Nov. Test. pp. 19—21.

The Patriarchal Religion, as above described, seems to have been the religion of Adam after his fall, of Abel, Seth, Enoch, and the antediluvian patriarchs; and afterwards of Noah, the second parent of mankind, and of the several heads of families derived from him, who probably carried it with them in their several dispersions. But, above all, this religion was signally exemplified in Abraham, who was illustrious for his faith, piety, and righteousness, and whom God was pleased to favour with special discoveries of his will. From him descended many great nations, among whom this religion, in its main principles, seems to have been preserved. There were also remarkable vestiges of it, for a long time, among several other nations; and indeed the belief of one supreme God, of a providence, of a hope of pardoning mercy, a sense of the obligations of piety and virtue, and of the acceptance and reward of sincere obedience, and the expectation of a future state, were never entirely extinguished. And whosoever among the Gentiles at any time, or in any nation, feared God and was a worker of righteousness, might be justly regarded as of the patriarchal religion. But, in process of time, the nations became generally depraved, and sunk into a deplorable darkness and corruption; and the great principles of religion were in a great measure overwhelmed with an amazing load of superstitions, idolatries, and corruptions of all kinds.

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§ 2. *A summary View of the Doctrines and Precepts of the Mosaic Dispensation.*

The second view of religion, presented to us in the Scriptures, is that which relates to the Mosaic dispensation. This was really and essentially the same, for substance, as that which was professed and practised in the ancient patriarchal times[1], with the addition of a special covenant made with a particular people; among whom God was pleased, for wise ends, to erect a sacred polity, and to whom he gave a revelation of his will, which was committed to writing, as the safest mode of transmission; religion having hitherto been preserved chiefly by tradition, which was more easily maintained during the long lives of men in the first ages. This special covenant was in no respect inconsistent with the universal providence and goodness of God towards mankind; nor did it in any degree vacate or infringe the ancient primitive religion which had obtained from the beginning, but which was designed to be subservient to the great ends of it, and to preserve it from being utterly depraved and extinguished. The principal end of that polity, and the main view to which it was directed, was to restore and preserve the true worship and adoration of the one living and true God, and of him only, in opposition to that polytheism

[1] The Mosaic law repealed or altered nothing in the patriarchal dispensation, beyond what the progressive development of the design of Infinite Wisdom absolutely required. Hence it adopted several particulars from patriarchism, such as sacrifice, the distinction between clean and unclean animals, the priesthood, the payment of tithes, certain moral precepts, and the observance of the Sabbath. These points are fully proved by Mr. Faber, Horæ Mosaicæ, vol. ii. pp. 25—53.

and idolatry which began then to spread generally through the nations; and to engage those to whom it was made known to the practice of piety, virtue, and righteousness, by giving them holy and excellent laws, expressly directing the particulars of their duty, and enforced by the sanctions of a divine authority, and also by promises and threatenings in the name of God. Another essential part of the Mosaic dispensation was, to keep up the hope and expectation of the Redeemer, who had been promised from the beginning, and to prepare men for that most perfect and complete dispensation which he was to introduce. And whoever impartially examines that constitution, must be obliged to acknowledge that it was admirably fitted to answer these most important ends.

I. The THEOLOGY OF JUDAISM was pure, sublime, and devotional. The belief of one supreme, self-existent, and all-perfect Being, the creator of the heavens and the earth, was the basis of all the religious institutions of the Israelites, the sole object of their hopes, fears, and worship. His adorable perfections, and especially the supreme providence of Jehovah,—as the sole dispenser of good and evil, and the benevolent preserver, protector, and benefactor of mankind,—are described by the inspired legislator of the Hebrews in unaffected strains of unrivalled sublimity; which, while they are adapted to our finite apprehensions by imagery borrowed from terrestrial and sensible objects, at the same time raise our conceptions to the contemplation of the spirituality and majesty of Him who "dwelleth in light inaccessible."

1. The Law of MOSES, however, will best speak for itself. It was the avowed design of that law to teach the Israelites that there is only ONE God, and to secure them from that polytheism and idolatry which prevailed among all the nations round about them. And accordingly his essential unity is especially inculcated, no less than his underived self-existence, eternity, and immutability.

Hear, O Israel, says Moses, *the Lord our God is* ONE *Lord.* (Deut. vi. 4.) Again,—*The Lord, he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else.* (iv. 39.) And the first commandment required them to *have no other gods besides him.* (Exod. xx. 3.) Idolatry, or the worship of any other gods but the ONE SUPREME GOD, was prohibited under the severest penalties. They were strictly required *not to bow down to the gods of the heathen nations, nor serve them,* nor so much as to *make mention of their names.* (Exod. xxiii. 24.) The law punished idolatry with death (Deut. xiii. 6. &c.), and denounced the curse of God and utter destruction against all those who went after other gods. (vi. 14., xi. 28., xxviii. 14. &c.) The Pentateuch begins with an account of the creation of the world by the one God, who *in the beginning created the heaven and the earth. He said, Let there be light, and there was light.* He made *the beasts of the earth,* and *the fowls of the air, and every living creature that moveth upon the earth, or in the waters.* And at last *he created man in his own image, after his own likeness; and gave him dominion over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.* (Gen. i.) This ONE GOD is described as necessarily self-existent — *I AM THAT I AM — is his name.* (Exod. iii. 14.)

He is called *the God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible.* (Deut. x. 17.) *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?* (Exod. xv. 11.) He is called *the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth.* (Gen. xiv. 22, &c.) *He killeth and maketh alive, he woundeth and he healeth; neither is there any that can deliver out of his hand.* (Deut. xxxii. 39.) *He gives us the rain in its due season, and sends grass in our fields:* And again, *He shuts up the heaven that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit.* (Deut. xi. 14. &c.) He is *the God of the spirits of all flesh.* (Num. xvi. 22.) The whole history of the Pentateuch is a narrative of God's providential dispensations, his love, and care of his faithful servants, and his constant superintendence over them; and ascribes all events, as well natural as miraculous, to God's providence. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, *called upon the Lord, and he heard them:* and he was *with them in all places whither they went.* The history of Joseph sets before us a beautiful and instructive example of God's providential designs brought about by natural causes. The Lord is represented as *God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath.* (Deut. iv. 39.) He is *the eternal and everlasting God.* (Gen. xxi. 33.; Deut. xxxiii. 27.) *He lifteth up his hand, and saith, I live for ever.* (xxxii. 40.) *God is not a man, that he should lie, nor the son of man, that he should repent.* (Numb. xxiii. 19.) *His work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he.* (Deut. xxxii. 4, &c.) He is *the judge of all the earth* (Gen. xviii. 25.): *He regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward.* (Deut. x. 17.) He is *an holy God* (Lev. xix. 2.); *the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments.* (Deut. vii. 9.) *The Lord is nigh unto his people in all things that they call upon him for.* (Deut. iv. 7.) *When they cry unto him, he hears their voice, and looks on their affliction.* (xxvi. 7.) *To him belongeth vengeance and recompence. The Lord shall judge his people* (xxxii. 35, 36.): *He will not justify the wicked* (Exod. xxiii. 7.), *and by no means clear the guilty; but he is merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin.* (xxxiv. 6, 7.)

2. Such is the sublime and beautiful representation which Moses has given us of the Divine Being and perfections: a similar representation, but much more clear and explicit (if possible), is contained in the writings of the PROPHETS and other inspired writers, who were raised up from time to time among the Jews. They teach us, that *the Lord is God alone of all the kingdoms of the earth*, and *made heaven and earth* (Isa. xxxvii. 16.); that *he is the first, and he is the last, and besides him there is no God* (xliv.6.); that *by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth* (Psal. xxxiii. 6.); *he spake the word, and they were made, he commanded, and they were created.* (Psal. cxlviii. 5.) *He is the Lord alone, he made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth, and all things that are therein; the seas, and all that is therein; and he preserveth them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth him.*

(Neh. ix. 6.) The supreme God is in these sacred writings distinguished by the name of Jehovah, which signifies necessary existence; and by the title of the Almighty, the Most High. We are told that *the world is his, and the fulness thereof.* (Psal. l. 12.) *In his hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.* (Job xii. 10.) *His is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven, and in the earth, is his; his is the kingdom, and he is exalted as head above all: Both riches and honour come of him; and he reigneth over all.* (1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12.) *The pillars of the earth are the Lord's; and he hath set the world upon them.* (1 Sam. ii. 8.) *He ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.* (Dan. iv. 32.) *He changeth the times, and the seasons: He removeth kings, and setteth up kings.* (ii. 21.) *He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.* (Jer. x. 13.) *Fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy wind, fulfil his word.* (Psal. cxlviii. 8.) *He is the true God, the living God, an everlasting king.* (Jer. x. 10.) He *is the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity.* (Isa. lvii., 15.) *Before the mountains were brought forth, or the earth and the world were formed, even from everlasting to everlasting he is God.* (Psal. xc. 2.) *He is the Lord, he changeth not.* (Mal. iii. 6.) *The earth and the heavens shall perish, but he shall endure: He is the same, and his years shall have no end.* (Psal. cii. 26, 27.) *Heaven is his throne, and earth is his footstool.* (Isa. lxvi. 1.) *Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord: Do not I fill heaven and earth?* (Jer. xxiii. 23, 24.) *He is about our path* (says the Psalmist), *and about our bed, and spieth out all our ways.— Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I go from thy presence? If I climb up into heaven, thou art there; if I go down to hell, thou art there also.—Yea, the darkness is no darkness with thee; the darkness and light to thee are both alike.* (Psal. cxxxix. 3. &c.) *The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.* (Prov. xv. 3.) *His eyes are upon the ways of man; and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.* (Job xxxiv. 22.) *He understandeth our thoughts afar off: Nor is there a word in our tongue, but he knoweth it altogether.* (Psal. cxxxix. 2. 4.) *He searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.* (1 Chron. xxviii. 9.) *He only knoweth the hearts of all the children of men.* (1 Kings viii. 39.) His understanding is infinite: He sees at once things past, present, and to come, *declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.* (Isa. xlvi. 10.) And in this the true God is distinguished from all the gods of the heathen, that he is able to *show the things that are to come hereafter, and to show what shall happen.* (xli. 22, 23., xliv. 7.) *He is mighty in strength and wisdom* (Job. xxxvi. 5.): *wonderful in counsel, excellent in working.* (Isa. xxviii. 29.) *He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.* (Job. v. 13.) *He turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish.* (Isa. xliv. 25.) *For there is no wisdom, nor understand-*

ing, nor counsel against the Lord. (Prov. xxi. 30.) *He can do every thing* (Job. xlii. 2.); *and there is nothing too hard for him.* (Jer. xxxii. 17.) *In his hand there is power and might, so that none is able to withstand him.* (2 Chron. xx. 6.) *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* (Psal. clxv. 17.) *There is none holy as the Lord.* (1 Sam. ii. 2.) *God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.* (Job xxxiv. 12.) *He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity.* (Hab. i. 13.) He is called *the God of truth.* (Isa. lxv. 16.) *His counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.* (xxv. 1.) *He will ever be mindful of his covenant; — the works of his hands are verity and judgment.* (Psal. cxi. 5. 7.) *The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. He is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works. — He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.* (cxlv. 8. &c.) *He is a father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows* (lxviii. 5.); *and delivereth the poor and needy from him that spoileth him.* (xxxv. 10.) *Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* (ciii. 13.) *The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers.* (xxxiv. 15.) *He is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he will also hear their cry, and will save them.* (cxlv. 18, 19.) *He is good, and ready to forgive.* (lxxxvi. 5.) If *the wicked forsake his way, and return unto the Lord, he will have mercy upon him, and will abundantly pardon.* (Isa. lv. 7.) *He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.* (Mic. vii. 18.) But though *he is slow to anger, he will not acquit the wicked.* (Nah. i. 3.) *To him belongeth vengeance* (Psal. xciv. 1.); and *he will render to every man according to his works.* (Prov. xxiv. 12.) *Righteous is the Lord, and upright are his judgments.* (Psal. cxix. 137.) *There is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.* (2 Chron. xix. 7.) Lastly, though *great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,* yet *his greatness is unsearchable.* (Psal. cxlv. 3.) *Lo, these are parts of his ways* (says Job), *but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can understand?* (Job xxvi. 14.) *As the heavens are higher than the earth* (saith God himself), *so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* (Isa. lv. 9.)

Were every passage relating to the nature and attributes of the Deity to be cited, it would be requisite to extract a very considerable portion of the Old Testament; but the preceding will suffice to evince the sublimity and excellence of its doctrine concerning these topics.

II. Equally excellent and explicit is the doctrine of the Mosaic dispensation relative to our Duty towards God; which is there set forth in a manner suitable to the idea given of his perfections, and with a solemnity becoming its importance. *Hear, O Israel,* says the illustrious legislator of the Hebrews, *The Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* (Deut. vi. 4, 5.) *Take good heed unto yourselves,* says Joshua, *that ye love the Lord your God.* (Josh.

xxiii. 11.) *O love the Lord, all ye his saints,* says the Psalmist. (Psal. xxxi. 23.) The fear of God is as strictly required; and such a fear as would induce them to keep God's commandments: — *Thou shalt fear thy God, and serve him,* says Moses. (Deut. vi. 13.) *Fear God,* says the preacher, *and keep his commandments; for this is the whole* duty *of man.* (Eccles. xii. 13.) Abraham, Isaac, and the elders are represented as *fearing God* (Gen. xxii. 12., xxxi. 42., xlii. 18.); *believing in him,* trusting in his promises, and *obeying his voice.* (xv. 6., xxii. 18., xxvi. 5.) Solomon exhorts men *to trust in the Lord with all their heart.* (Prov. iii. 5.) *Blessed is the man,* says the prophet, *that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.* (Jer. xvii. 7.) The Psalmist on every occasion expresses his firm trust in God, and faith in his promises: *In God,* says he, *I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.* (Psal. lvi. 4.) And again, *My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: He is my defence, I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength and my refuge is in God. Trust in him at all times, ye people.* (lxii. 5. &c.) Obedience to all God's commandments is strongly insisted on throughout the Old Testament; and (what seems peculiar to the Jewish law) all moral duties are enforced on this principle, *I am the Lord your God.* (Lev. xix. 3. &c.) — We have in Job the greatest example of patience and resignation to God's will. *The Lord gave,* says he, *and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.* (Job i. 21.) And again, *Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?* (ii. 10.) — And Solomon teaches the same good lesson: *My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction. For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighted.* (Prov. iii. 11, 12.) The Israelites were required to *walk humbly with their God* (Mic. vi. 8.); and are taught that *the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;* and that *a broken and contrite heart God will not despise.* (Psal. li. 17.) — Not merely an external service, but the *internal worship* of a pure heart was required of them. *Offer unto God* not sacrifice but *thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High.* (l. 14.) *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is his delight.* (Prov. xv. 8.) *Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.* (Psal. xxix. 2.) We have already seen how strictly all idolatry was prohibited by the Mosaical law; and the same doctrine is taught by all the prophets. The one God was the sole and constant object of their worship; to him they gave all honour, glory, and praise; to him alone they offered their prayers; and to him they returned thanks as the giver of all good things; and him they worshipped, not under the vain representation of an image or idol, but in a manner suitable to his spiritual nature and transcendent majesty. To the ONE GOD alone, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses, Samuel, and the prophets, offered their prayers; and he heard them. The whole book of Psalms consists of prayers and praises, offered to the one true God. *I will call upon God,* says David, *and the Lord shall save me.* (Psal. lv. 16.) And again, *O*

thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. (lxv. 2.) The whole service of the tabernacle and temple was directed to the one God. At the dedication of the temple, Solomon offered up a solemn prayer to Jehovah the God of Israel, to whom there was *no God like in heaven above, or on earth beneath.* Him he besought to *have respect unto the prayers and supplications* which should be there offered, and to *hear in heaven his dwelling-place.* (1 Kings viii. 23. 29, 30.) And *God appeared to him,* and assured him that *he had heard his prayer, and that his eyes should be open and his ears attent unto the prayer that should be made in that place.* (2 Chron. vii. 12. &c.)[1]

III. The BELIEF OF A FUTURE STATE which we have already seen was held by the patriarchs[2], (though not explicitly taught by Moses, whose writings presuppose it as a generally adopted article of religion,) was transmitted from them to the Israelites, and appears in various parts of the Old Testament. From the circumstance of the promise of temporal blessings being principally, if not entirely, annexed to the laws of Moses, Bishop Warburton attempted to deduce an argument in support of his divine mission.[3] It is impossible here to enter into an examination of this argument: but we may observe, in the first place, "that *the omission of a future state, as a sanction to the laws of Moses, can be satisfactorily accounted for;* and, secondly, *that the Old Testament shows that he himself believed a future state, and contains a gradual development of it.* These two propositions, the former of which is in unison with the opinion of Warburton, the latter at variance with him, appear to be very satisfactorily established by the luminous reasoning of Dr Graves.[4] Instead of employing the omission of the doctrine as a *medium,* by which to prove that a divine interposition was necessary for the erection and maintenance of Judaism, he first shows the reality of a divine interposition, and then that the omission in question, so far from being inconsistent with the divine origin of the system, does, in fact, necessarily result from the peculiar nature of the dispensation, and from the character of the people to whom it was given.— The polytheistic principle of tutelary deities maintained that their worship was attended with a national prosperity. The futility of this it was the intention of God to display by open and unequivocal demonstrations of his own omnipotence. The moral government of Jehovah was to be exhibited on the earth by the theocracy which he established.[5] Its very nature required temporal sanctions, and their immediate enforcement; its object could not be attained by waiting till the invisible realities of a future state

[1] Dr. Randolph's two Sermons on the Excellency of the Jewish Law vindicated, in vol. ii. of his View of our Blessed Saviour's Ministry, &c. pp. 259—273.

[2] See pp. 335, 336. *suprà.*

[3] The following is a summary of his hypothesis: — The doctrine of a future state is necessary to the well-being of civil society, under the *ordinary* government of providence· all mankind have ever so conceived of the matter. The Mosaic institution was without this support, and yet did not want it. What follows, but that the Jewish affairs were administered by an extraordinary providence, distributing rewards and punishments with an equal hand, and, consequently, that the MISSION OF MOSES WAS DIVINE? Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses, book vi. sect. 6. (Works, vol. vi. p. 106. *et seq.* 8vo. edit.)

[4] On the Pentateuch, Part 3. lect. 3, 4.

[5] Div. Leg. b. v. sect. 4.

should be unveiled. The previous exhibition of such a moral government was the best preparation for the full revelation of man's future destiny, and of the means provided for his welfare in it, by a merciful and redeeming God. 'Life and immortality were thus to be fully brought to light by the Gospel.' As yet the bulk of mankind were unprepared for it, and were better fitted to comprehend, and be influenced by, sensible manifestations of the divine judgments, than by the remoter doctrine of a future state of retribution.

"The Old Testament, however, and even the writings of Moses, contained intelligible intimations of immortality. The four last books of the Pentateuch, indeed, were principally occupied in the detail of the legal regulations, and the sanctions necessary to enforce them; yet even from them Jesus Christ deduced an argument to the confusion of the Sadducees.[1] And in the book of Genesis are several occurrences, which must have led the pious Jews to the doctrine of a future existence, even had they possessed no remains of patriarchal tradition. The account of the state of man before the fall, of the penalty first annexed to his transgression, and of the sentence pronounced upon our first parents, considered in connection with the promise of a deliverance, would necessarily suggest such a doctrine. Could the believing Jews conclude that death would have followed the acceptance of Abel's sacrifice, unless he was translated to some better state of existence and felicity? How also did God show his approbation of Enoch's piety, unless he took him to himself, and to immortality and bliss? Doubtless the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was not the first who discovered that 'the fathers did not look for transitory promises;' that 'they sought a better country, even a heavenly;' and that 'God hath prepared for them a city;' and that Moses himself rejected the 'enjoyment of the pleasure of sin for a season,' because 'he had respect to the recompence of the reward.' This important and consolatory truth of a future state of being was, in process of time, displayed to the Jews more and more clearly. The book of Job is very explicit upon the subject. The royal Psalmist has spoken of it with great confidence[2]; and Solomon, besides several passages in his Proverbs[3], which seem to allude to it, is supposed to have written the book of Ecclesiastes, which concludes with a clear declaration of it, for the express purpose of proving and enforcing it.[4] The translation of Elijah[5], and the restoration to life of three several persons by him and his successor[6], must have given demonstration of the probability of the same doctrine; which also Isaiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Amos, and especially Daniel, very frequently inculcate, and even presuppose as a matter of notoriety and popular belief."[7]

[1] Matt. xxii. 32.; Mark xii. 26, 27.; Luke xx. 37, 38.

[2] See Psalms xxi. xxxvi. xlix. lxxiii. cxxxix. Also Bp. Horne on Psalms xvi. xvii. and xlix.

[3] Prov. v. 21—23., xiv. 32.

[4] Eccles iii. 16, 17. and viii. 11. 13

[5] 2 Kings ii. 11.

[6] 1 Kings xvii.; 2 Kings iv. and xiii. 21.

[7] Isa. xiv. 19. and xxvi. 19—21.; Hos. xiii. 14.; Amos iv. 12, 13.; Dan. xii. 1—3. Franks's Norrisian Prize Essay on the Use and Necessity of Revelation, pp. 72—75 Du Voisin, Autorité des Livres de Moysé, pp. 406—421

To these considerations we may add the fact, that in the books of Leviticus (xix. 26. 31., xx. 27.), and Deuteronomy (xviii. 10, 11.), there are various enactments against diviners, enchanters, and those who profess to know the future by consulting either familiar spirits, or the spirits of the departed. All these superstitions suppose the belief of spirits, and the doctrine of the existence of souls after death; and Moses would not have prohibited the consulting of them by express laws, if he had not been apprehensive that the Hebrews, after the example of the neighbouring heathen nations, would have abused the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, which was universally received among them. Severe, however, as these laws were, they did not entirely repress this abuse; for the Psalmist (cvi. 28.) reproaches the Israelites with having eaten *the sacrifices of the dead*, that is, sacrifices offered to the manes of the dead. We have also, in Saul, a signal instance of this superstition. After he had *cut off those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land* (1 Sam. xxviii. 3. 9.), having in vain consulted THE LORD respecting the issue of his approaching conflict with the Philistines, he went in quest of a woman that had a familiar spirit, and commanded her to evoke the soul of the prophet Samuel. (ver. 7—12.) This circumstance evidently proves that Saul and the Israelites believed in the immortality of the soul.

IV. The EXPECTATION OF A REDEEMER, which was cherished by the patriarchs, was also kept up under the Mosaic dispensation by predictions, both by the Hebrew legislator and by the prophets who succeeded him, until the fulness of time came, when the Messiah was manifested. But as this topic (which is introduced here only to show the connection between the patriarchal religion and that of the Jews) has already been noticed as an accomplishment of prophecy[1], we proceed to remark,—

V. That the MORALITY OF THE JEWISH CODE exhibits a perfection and beauty, in no respect inferior to its religious doctrines and duties. We owe to it the decalogue, a repository of duty to God and man, so pure and comprehensive as to be absolutely without parallel; and these commandments are not the impotent recommendations of man, or the uncertain deductions of human reason, but the dictates of the God of purity, flowing from his immediate legislation, and promulgated with awful solemnity. The sanctions also of the remaining enactments of the law are such as morality possessed in no other nation.

1. In the first place, the most excellent and amiable virtue of humility, a virtue little practised, and scarcely ever taught by the philosophers, is recommended and taught in the Old Testament, as well as in the New. Moses admonishes *the children of Israel to beware lest their heart be lifted up, and they forget the Lord their God, and ascribe their wealth and prosperity to their own power and might.* (Deut. viii. 14. &c.) And the prophet Micah teaches them, that *to walk humbly with their God,* was one of the principal things which *the Lord required of them.* (Mic. vi. 8.) We are assured by Isaiah that *God dwells with*

[1] See pp. 290—295 *suprà*, and the Appendix, No. VI. *infrà*.

him that is of a contrite and humble spirit. (Isa. lvii. 15.) And Solomon declares, that *pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall;* that *better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud;* and again — *Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord.* (Prov. xvi. 5. &c.) The kindred virtue of meekness is also a doctrine of the Old Testament. The Psalmist assures us, that *God will guide the meek in judgment, and teach them his way.* (Psal. xxv. 9.) And Solomon teaches us, that *he that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.* (Prov. xvi. 32.) It is not necessary to adduce the many exhortations to diligence, which we meet with in the writings of the Old Testament. Every one knows that beautiful passage in the book of Proverbs: — *Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise, which, having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.* (vi. 6. &c.)

2. Further, lewdness and debauchery were not only commonly practised and allowed among the heathen nations; but shameless prostitutions and the most abominable impurities were introduced into their temples, and made a part of their religion. But all uncleanness, and unnatural lusts, were strictly forbidden in the law of Moses. It is said that *because of these abominations, the Lord cast out the Canaanites before them;* and that *whosoever shall commit any of these abominations shall be cut off from among their people. The children of Israel,* therefore, were required not to *defile themselves therein* (Lev. xviii. and xx.), but *to be holy, because the Lord their God was holy.* (xix. 2.) The law ordains, that *there should be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel.*[1] (Deut. xxiii. 17.) And in general, all prostitution is forbidden: — *Do not prostitute thy daughter,* says the law, *to cause her to be a whore, lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness.* (Lev. xix. 29.) And these were some of the crimes which provoked God to visit the Jews, and destroy their city and temple: — *They committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses.* (Jer. v. 7. &c.) Frequently and earnestly does Solomon call upon young men to beware of the arts of strange women. *Rejoice,* says he, *with the wife of thy youth, and embrace not the bosom of a stranger. For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.* (Prov. v. 18. &c.)

3. The same wise man cautions men as earnestly against gluttony and drunkenness: — *Be not,* says he, *amongst wine-bibbers, amongst riotous eaters of flesh. For the glutton and the drunkard shall come to poverty.* (xxiii. 20, 21.) And Isaiah pronounces a *woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue until night, till wine inflame them.* (Isa. v. 11.) And it

[1] The words in the original signify persons consecrated to these lewd purposes, who prostituted themselves in their temples, and whose hire was dedicated to the service of their filthy gods. And accordingly it follows in the next verse, *Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog* (a fit appellation for these catamites), *into the house of the Lord thy God for any vow; for even both these are an abomination unto the Lord thy God.*

is enacted by the law, that if a son be accused by his parents as *stubborn, and rebellious, a glutton, and a drunkard, he shall be stoned to death.* (Deut. xxi. 20, 21.) All covetous desires are also prohibited. The tenth commandment forbade the Israelites to *covet any of their neighbours'* goods. (Exod. xx. 17.) They were admonished not to be *greedy of gain* (Prov. xv. 27.), or *labour to be rich* (xxiii. 4.); and are taught to ask of God, that *he would give them neither poverty nor riches, but feed them with food convenient for them.* (xxx. 8.) Our duty to our neighbour is also clearly and fully set forth in the law and the prophets. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* (Lev. xix. 18.), was a precept of the law, that in one word comprehends every duty which we owe one to another.

4. All the relative duties of life are therein most plainly taught. We read in the book of Genesis, that *woman was taken out of man; and therefore shall a man leave his father, and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.* (Gen. ii. 23, 24.) Adultery was forbidden by the seventh commandment (Exod. xx. 14.); and was by the Mosaical law punishable with death. (Lev. xx. 10.) The fifth commandment required them to *honour their father, and their mother, that their days may be long upon the land which the Lord their God gave them.* (Exod. xx. 12.) And, *if a man had a stubborn and rebellious son, who would not obey the voice of his father, or mother, and when they had chastened him, would not hearken unto them, they might bring him unto the elders of the city; and all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die: so,* says Moses, *shalt thou put away evil from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear.* (Deut. xxi. 18. &c.) And the same law pronounces a curse on all disobedient children, — *Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother.* (xxvii. 16.) The Israelites were forbidden to use their servants ill: *Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour,* saith the law; *but shalt fear thy God.* (Lev. xxv. 43.) Again, — *Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant, that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers, that are in thy land within thy gates. At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.* (Deut. xxiv. 14, 15.) And to the same purpose speaks Job: *If I did despise the cause of my man-servant, or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me, what then shall I do when God riseth up? And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him? And did not one fashion us in the womb?* (Job xxxi. 13. &c.)

5. Every duty of justice was indeed strictly required by the law of Moses. Murder was forbidden by the sixth commandment, adultery by the seventh, and theft by the eighth. *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed* (Gen. ix. 6.), was the first commandment given to Noah after the flood. And the same sentence was denounced against murder by the Mosaical law. All kinds of violence, oppression, or fraud, were also forbidden. (Exod. xxi. 12.; Numb. xxxv.; Deut. xix.) *That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live,* says the law. (Deut. xvi. 20.) *Ye shall not*

oppress one another; but thou shalt fear the Lord thy God. (Lev. xxv. 17.) *Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him.* (xix. 13.) *Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.* (xix. 11.) *Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in mete-yard, in weight, or in measure. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin shall ye have. I am the Lord your God.* (xix. 35. &c.) The same commandment is repeated in the book of Deuteronomy; and it is added, that *all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord.* (Deut. xxv. 13. &c.) And therefore our Saviour, when he says to his disciples, — *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,* — adds, — *for this is the law and the prophets.* (Matt. vii. 12.)

6. The law of Moses was, moreover, characterised by benevolence and goodness, which tended to develope the same virtues among the Hebrews. It indignantly prohibited human sacrifices, which at that time were so generally prevalent; it softened the horrors of war, so frightful in those barbarous ages; it defended the cause of the poor, of the accused, of the fatherless, and of slaves. In all these respects, the Hebrew legislator was obliged to make some concessions to his countrymen; but when we compare his institutions with the usages which then generally prevailed, we cannot mistake the tendency and effect of the Mosaic laws. We see, not only all injustice but all hatred forbidden, and humanity towards the poor most positively enjoined. *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* (Lev. xix. 17, 18.) *If they saw their brother's ox or sheep go astray, they were to bring them again to him. If they saw his ass or his ox fall down by the way, they were to help him to lift them up again.* (Deut. xxii. 1—4.) *If their brother was waxen poor, and fallen in decay, they were commanded to relieve him, yea, though he be a stranger, or sojourner,* and to take *no usury of him, or increase.* (Lev. xxv. 35, 36.) *If they at all took their neighbour's raiment to pledge, they were to deliver it to him by that the sun goeth down.* (Exod. xxii. 26.) To the same purpose we read (Deut. xv.), *If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need.* (Deut. xv. 7, 8.) They were required, *when they reaped the harvest of their land, not to make clean riddance of the corners of their field, nor to gather any gleaning of their harvest; but to leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger.* (Lev. xxiii. 22.) The like they were to do in their olive-yard and vine-yard: *they were not to go over them again, but leave the gleanings for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, remembering that they themselves were bondmen in the land of Egypt.* (Deut. xxiv. 20. &c.) Nor were these kind offices to be performed only to their brethren or friends. *If they met their enemy's ox or ass going astray,* they were required to *bring it back to him again. If they saw the ass of him that hated them lying under his burden, they were surely to help with him.* (Exod. xxiii. 4, 5.) To the same purpose speaks Solomon: — *If thine enemy be hungry,*

give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink. (Prov. xxv. 21.) Nay, they were to extend their mercy even to the brute beasts: *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox, when he treadeth out the corn.* (Deut. xxv. 4.) *When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under the dam. Whether it be cow, or ewe, ye shall not kill it and her young both in one day.* (Lev. xxii. 27, 28.) *If a bird's nest chance to be before thee, thou shalt not take the dam with the young.* (Deut. xxii. 6.) *Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.* (Exod. xxiii. 19.)

In short, it seems that Moses was desirous of softening and civilising the Hebrews, gradually, by mercy and beneficence. A few observations on the laws respecting strangers will confirm and illustrate this remark.

It is well known to all who are conversant with antiquity, that strangers, who were denominated barbarians, were treated as enemies, and often put out of the protection of the laws. The Gospel had not yet taught that all men were brethren, and that heretics and enemies are alike our neighbours. Further, the Mosaic legislation tended to insulate the Jews among other nations, and to detach them from their neighbours in order to protect them from their example. One would expect, therefore, that Moses would treat strangers in the same manner as they were at that time universally treated, and perhaps even with greater severity: but it was his especial object to render his people compassionate and generous, at the same time he endeavoured to remove strangers to a distance from Palestine, by every means consistent with humanity. The following are his enactments respecting them: — *If a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him: but the stranger, that dwelleth in your land, shall be unto you as one born amongst you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.* (Lev. xix. 33, 34.) And again, God *loveth the stranger in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.* Apprehensive lest strangers should be exposed to legal injustice (an occurrence which is frequent in the infancy of legislation), Moses enacted that they should be subject to the *same* laws and penalties as the Hebrews themselves were. (Lev. xxiv. 15—22.; Numb. xv. 15, 16.) And, finally, the oppression of strangers was one of the twelve crimes which were solemnly cursed on Mount Ebal. (Deut. xxvii. 19.)[1]

Such is a concise view of the purity and extent of the moral law, delivered by Moses. How admirably are such language and such sentiments as these suited to the sacred original whence they flow! How strongly do they attest the Divine benevolence which dictated the Jewish law, which alone could enforce such precepts by adequate

[1] This was forbidden, not only as it was an idolatrous custom practised among the heathen, but as it carried with it the appearance of barbarity. Vide Phil. Jud. περι φιλανθρωπιας. Joseph. contra Apion, l. ii. § 22. &c. Dr. Randolph's View of our Blessed Saviour's Ministry, &c. pp. 282—290. Cellérier, de l'Origine Authentique et Divine de l'Ancien Testament, pp. 221—233. Du Voisin, Autorité des Livres de Moyse, pp. 368—386.

sanctions, and impress such sentiments upon the human heart with practical conviction! If the intermixture of such sentiments and precepts with the civil code, and the union of political regulations with moral instructions and religious observances, is unparalleled in any other country, and by any other lawgiver,— does not this circumstance afford a strong presumptive evidence of the divine original of the Mosaic code?

VI. The Mosaic dispensation, in its general provisions, comprehended a complete form of government, both civil and religious; and in both these respects it was purely a theocracy. Its civil enactments were adapted to peculiar cases and circumstances: but they enjoined, as we have seen, the duties of social life in all its several relations; and they appointed civil rulers to carry these laws into effect. The religious enactments of the Mosaic dispensation contained certain doctrines, promises, threatenings, and predictions, which were the authoritative rule of faith to the Jews; these enactments also prescribed a great multitude of ceremonial and judicial institutions, which, however indifferent in themselves, were obligatory on the Jews, by the commanding authority of God.[1] The precise use of all these institutions we cannot, at this distance of time, fully ascertain. But some of them were manifestly established in opposition to the rites of the Egyptians and other neighbouring nations, and with a view to preserve them from the infections of their idolatries. Others of their rites were instituted as memorials of the signal and extraordinary acts of Divine Providence towards them, especially those by which their law had been confirmed and established. And the history of the Jewish people, the vengeance executed by them on idolatrous nations, the wonderful works of God wrought among them, and the excellency of their laws and constitutions, could not but awaken the attention of the rest of mankind, and hold forth a light to the heathen world throughout which they were dispersed.

Infinite wisdom, however, had a still further design in the Mosaic dispensation. It was designed to prepare the way for that more perfect dispensation which was to succeed it. Its rites and ceremonies prefigure and set forth the coming of *our Lord Jesus Christ,* who was *the end of the Law* (Rom. x. 4.), and who is pointed out and referred to through every part of the Old Testament. *The law was their schoolmaster to bring them unto Christ.* (Gal. iii. 24.) And though the elements which it taught were weak and poor, in respect of the more complete system which was afterwards to take place, yet they were excellent in their kind, and wisely adapted to the exigencies of those times.

The law, though not absolutely perfect, had a perfection suitable to its kind and design: it was adapted to the genius of the people to whom it was given, and admirably calculated to keep them a people distinct from the rest of mankind, and prevent their being involved in the idolatries common among other nations. And it was at the same time ordained to presignify good things to come, and to bear a strong

[1] See a full account of the religious and civil polity of the Jews, *infra*, Vol. III.

attestation to the truth of the Christian religion. These were surely good ends, and worthy of a wise and good God. If God then chose Israel for his peculiar people, it was because all the rest of the world was immersed in idolatry and superstition. Nor did he thereby cease to be the God of the Gentiles. *He left not himself without witness* amongst them; *he did them good, and gave them rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons.* (Acts xiv. 17.) And *his eternal power and godhead* (Rom. i. 19, 20.) was manifested to them by the works of his creation. He was also at all times ready to receive those who turned from their idolatries, and became proselytes to the true religion. And he had prepared *his Son a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.* (1 Tim. ii. 6.) The Jews might indeed take occasion from hence to value themselves, and despise others: their law, however, gave them no encouragement or pretence so to do; but quite the contrary. And with regard to their ceremonial law, they were all along taught, both by Moses and their prophets, that true religion did not consist in such external observances. *Circumcise the foreskin of your heart* (Deut. x. 16.), said Moses to them. And again,— *The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.* (xxx. 6.) The like doctrine taught Samuel:— *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.* (1 Sam. xv. 22.) *Thou desirest not sacrifice*, says David, *else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* (Psal. li. 16, 17.) *To do justice and judgment*, says Solomon, *is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.* (Prov. xxi. 3.) Isaiah speaks very fully to the same purpose:— *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, of he goats,* &c.— *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.* (Isa. i. 11. 16.) Thus also speaks Jeremiah: *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.* (Jer. vii. 3, 4.) *I desired mercy, and not sacrifice,* says God by the prophet Hosea, *and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings.* (Hos. vi. 6.) Lastly, we read in the prophet Micah,— *Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* (Mic. vi. 6. &c.) If then the Jews placed

their dependence on an external show of religion, they must stand condemned by their own Law, and their Prophets.

But, however excellent the Mosaic institution was in itself, and admirably adapted to the Jews, for the purposes for which it was intended, yet it was imperfect, as being only one part of the grand revelation of the divine purpose to save mankind through the blood of the Messiah, and also as being designed for a small nation, and not for the whole world. It was indeed strictly of a local and temporary nature. One part of its design being to separate the Israelites from the rest of mankind (which it effectually accomplished), many of its ordinances are therefore of such a nature, that they are not calculated for general adoption.[1] The Jewish dispensation was only temporary, and preparatory to that fuller manifestation of the divine will, which in the fulness of time was to be made known to the world. This is not only implied in its typical character, which has already been noticed, but is also intimated, in no obscure terms, in those predictions which announce its abrogation, the substitution of the evangelical laws by the advent of the Messiah, and the conversion of the Gentiles. To omit the prophecies concerning the Messiah, which have already been noticed[2], the cessation of the Mosaic dispensation is foretold by Jeremiah in the following explicit terms:—*Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with the house of their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband to them, saith the Lord); but this shall be the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, saying, Know ye the Lord: for they shall* ALL *know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.* (Jer. xxxi. 31—34.) From which passage, Paul infers (Heb. viii. 7—13.), that the mention of a *new* covenant necessarily implies the first to be old, and that, if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion for the second. Compare also Haggai ii. 6. with Heb. xii. 26, 27.

Equally important are all those predictions, which mention the calling of the Gentiles.[3] All these are punctually fulfilled in the preaching of the Gospel, but are not so much as possible, supposing the law to be still in force, which confined all solemn worship and sacrifices to the temple at Jerusalem. Nay, further, this enlarge-

[1] Thus the Jews were commanded to appear personally in Jerusalem at their three great festivals; and if all men had been converted to Judaism, this law would have been equally binding upon them. But it would have been impossible for the greater part of mankind to repair to Jerusalem three or four times in the year; for, if this was a necessary part of religion, the lives of half the world would be entirely spent in a wearisome, never-ending pilgrimage. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, vol. ii. p. 435.

[2] See pp. 290—295. *suprà*, and the Appendix, No. VI. Chap. I. Sect. I. *infrà*.

[3] See Isa. ii. 2., x. xi. xix. 24., xlix. lx.; Mic. iv.; Mal. i. 11.

ment of the church plainly supersedes those other ceremonies, which were designed to distinguish the Israelites as God's peculiar people; for the partition wall must necessarily be broken down, and Jew and Gentile both made one whenever those prophecies should be accomplished.

Let us then adore the wisdom and goodness of God in all his dispensations. *His statutes are right and rejoice the heart,* and all his commandments are righteous. (Psal. xix. 8.) And these same righteous commandments and holy doctrines are delivered to us in the Gospel (as will be shown in the following pages), with still greater purity and perfection, and free from that burthen of ceremonies, which the circumstances of the Jewish age and people rendered necessary.

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§ 3. *A summary View of the Doctrines and Precepts of the Gospel Dispensation.*

I. Divine Character of the Founder of the Christian Religion.

The third and last dispensation of religion is that which was introduced by that divine and glorious person whom the prophets had foretold. This is properly the Christian Dispensation, which was designed and fitted for an universal extent, and in which, considered in its original purity, religion is brought to its highest perfection and noblest improvement. An admirable wisdom, goodness, and purity, shone forth in the whole conduct and character of the great author of it. He came in the fulness of time, when the inefficacy of human reason to reform mankind, as well as of the Jewish dispensation, had been fully proved; and when the state of the world was peculiarly calculated to test the truth of Jesus Christ's pretensions to be a prophet of the Most High. He came, moreover, in the fulness of time, the time which had been pointed out in the prophetical writings. In him the several predictions relating to the extraordinary person that was to come were fulfilled, and the several characters by which he was described were wonderfully united, and in no other person. He appeared, as was foretold concerning him, mean in his outward condition and circumstances, and yet maintained in his whole conduct a dignity becoming his divine character. Many of his miracles were of such a kind, and performed in such a manner, as seemed to argue a dominion over nature, and its established laws, and they were acts of great goodness as well as power. He went about doing good to the bodies and to the souls of men; and the admirable instructions he gave were delivered with a divine authority, and yet with great familiarity and condescension. And his own practice was every way suited to the excellency of his precepts. He exhibited the most finished pattern of universal holiness, of love to God, of zeal for the divine glory, of the most wonderful charity and benevolence towards mankind, of the most unparalleled self-denial, of a heavenly mind and life, of meekness and patience, humility and condescension. Never was there so perfect a character, so godlike, venerable, and amiable, so

remote from that of an enthusiast or an impostor. He is the only founder of a religion in the history of mankind, which is totally unconnected with all human policy and government, and therefore totally unconducive to any wordly purpose whatever. All others, as Mohammed, Numa, and even Moses himself, blended their religious and civil institutions together, and thus acquired dominion over their respective people; but Christ neither aimed at nor would accept of any such power; he rejected every object which all other men pursue, and made choice of all those which others fear to encounter. No other founder of a religion ever made his own sufferings and death a *necessary* part of his original plan, and essential to his mission. Jesus Christ, however, most expressly foretold his own sufferings, the cruel and ignominious death he was to undergo, his resurrection from the dead on the third day, his ascension into heaven, the dreadful judgments and calamities that should be inflicted on the Jewish nation, and, what seemed the most improbable thing in the world, the wonderful progress of his own Gospel from the smallest beginnings, notwithstanding the persecutions and difficulties to which he foretold it should be exposed. All this was most exactly fulfilled; he rose again on the third day, and showed himself alive to his disciples after his passion by many infallible proofs, when their hopes were so sunk, that they could hardly believe that he was risen, till they could no longer doubt of it, without renouncing the testimony of all their senses. He gave them a commission to go and preach his Gospel to all nations, and promised that, to enable them to do it with success, they should be endued with the most extraordinary powers and gifts of the Holy Ghost. This accordingly they did, and though destitute of all wordly advantages, without power, riches, interest, policy, learning, or eloquence, they went through the world preaching a crucified Jesus, as the Saviour and Lord of men, and teaching the things which he had commanded them; and by the wonderful powers with which they were invested, and the evidences they had produced of their divine mission, they prevailed, and spread the religion of Jesus, as their great Master had foretold, in the midst of sufferings and persecutions, and in opposition to the reigning inveterate preudices both of Jews and Gentiles.

II. If we examine the nature and tendency of the GOSPEL DISPENSATION, and of the DOCTRINES taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles, we shall find them to be in every respect worthy of God, and adapted to the necessities of mankind. They retain all that is excellent in the Old Testament revelation; for Christ came, not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them, and to carry the scheme of religion there laid down to a still higher degree of excellency. Accordingly, he taught all the fundamental doctrines of the Christian system, which are necessary to be believed and obeyed in order to the attainment of salvation. Such, for instance, are the existence and perfections of God; the righteous and reasonable character of his law; the rebellion, apostasy, and corruption of man; the impossibility of justification by the works of the law; Christ's own divine character, as the Son of God and the Saviour of men; justifi-

cation by faith in him; the deity and offices of the Holy Spirit; the nature and necessity of regeneration, faith, repentance, holiness of heart and life; a future state; a judgment to come; and a recompence of reward to the righteous and the wicked; and the spiritual nature of his kingdom. These are the leading subjects taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles; to adduce *all* the passages of the New Testament that assert them would extend this section to an undue length. A few of the principal testimonies may properly claim to be noticed.

1. The account of God and of his Perfections contained in the Scriptures commends itself to our reason, as worthy of the highest and most excellent of all beings, and the most suitable affections and dispositions towards him. He is represented as a pure spirit, the Creator and Governor of the world, possessed of infinite wisdom, holiness, truth, justice, goodness, and perfection; the witness and judge of our actions; eternal, immortal, invisible, unchangeable, and omnipresent.[1] At the same time, his majesty is softened (if we may be allowed the expression) by his benevolence, which is liberal and unwearied in diffusing good throughout the universe: "his tender mercies are over all his works," embracing at once the interests of our souls and our bodies; and while he bestows in abundance the blessings and consolations of the present life, he has provided for us perfect and exalted felicity in the life to come. Of all the views of God which had ever been given, none was so calculated to endear him to us, and to inspire our hearts with confidence, as this short but interesting description, of which the scheme of redemption affords a sublime illustration, —" God is love!" (1 John iv. 16.) But the Gospel not only makes known to us the nature of God; it also imparts to us a full discovery of our duty to him, clothed in ideas the most venerable, amiable, and engaging. We are required to fear God, but it is not with a servile horror, such as superstition inspires, but with a filial reverence. We are directed and encouraged to address ourselves to him as our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ the Son of his love, and in his name to offer up our prayers and praises, our confessions and thanksgivings, with the profoundest humility, becoming creatures deeply sensible of their own unworthiness, and yet with an ingenuous affiance, hope, and joy. We are to yield the most unreserved submission to God as our sovereign Lord, our most wise and righteous Governor, and most gracious Benefactor; to resign ourselves to his disposal, and acquiesce in his providential dispensations, as being persuaded that he orders all things really for the best; to walk continually as in his sight, and with a regard to his approbation, setting him before us as our great all-seeing witness and judge, our chiefest good and highest end. Above all, we are required to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and mind, and strength, and to show that we love him by keeping his commandments, by

[1] John iv. 24.; Rom. i. 20.; Heb. iii. 4.; Matt. xxiii. 9.; Eph. iv. 6.; Matt. x. 29, 30.; Luke x. 24—28.; 1 Tim. i. 17.; John xvii. 11.; Rev. iii. 7., xv. 4.; John vii. 28.; 2 Cor. i. 18.; 1 John i. 9.; Rev. xv. 3.; Eph. i. 23.

aspiring after a conformity to him in his imitable perfections, and by endeavouring, as far as we are able, to glorify him in the world.

The external worship of God, according to the idea given of it in the New Testament, is pure and spiritual, and is characterised by a noble simplicity. As *God is a spirit,* he is to be worshipped, not in a formal manner, but *in spirit and in truth.* (John iv. 24.) The numerous rites of the Mosaic dispensation, which, though wisely suited to that time and state, were marks of the imperfection of that economy, are now abolished. The ordinances of Christianity, prescribed in the Gospel, are few in number, easy to be observed, and noble in their use and significancy; and those ceremonies, which are necessary in order that all things may be done decently and in order, are left to be filled up, in every country, at the discretion of pious men lawfully appointed. — A glorious plan of religious worship this! grounded upon the perfections of the divine nature, and admirably corresponding with the case and necessities of sinful man.

2. That man should love God with all his heart, is not the language of religion only; it is also the dictate of reason. But, alas! neither reason nor religion have had sufficient influence to produce this effect. Man has offended God, and guilt exposes him to punishment; for the holiness of God must hate sin, and his justice must lead him to testify in his conduct the displeasure which his heart feels. That man is also a depraved creature, and manifests that depravity in his sentiments and disposition, the whole history of the human kind furnishes abundant proof. If the annals of the different nations of the earth do not pourtray the tempers and actions of a race of dreadfully depraved creatures, there is no such thing in nature as an *argument.* The tendency of guilt and depravity is as naturally and certainly to misery, as of a stone to fall downwards.

In what way *guilty* and *depraved* creatures can be delivered from wickedness and punishment, and restored to goodness and felicity, is one of the most difficult, as it is one of the most important, questions which can employ the mind. "God is justly displeased: how shall he be reconciled? Guilt makes man afraid of God: how shall the cause of fear be removed? Depravity makes man averse to intercourse with God: how shall his sentiments and disposition be changed?" These are all difficulties which natural religion cannot resolve; and concerning which reason is utterly silent. *Repentance* and *reformation* have been considered by many as fully sufficient to banish all these evils; but they have no countenance for their opinion from the course of God's moral government. A *debauchee* repents bitterly and sincerely of his vicious excesses; but repentance does not heal his diseased body: "he is made to possess the sins of his youth;" and the fatal effects of his vices bring him to an early grave. The *gamester* repents of his folly, and reforms his conduct: but his penitence and reformation do not procure the restoration of his lost estate; and he spends his remaining years in poverty and want. By imitating, men testify their approbation of the divine conduct, in their ideas of distributive justice. The *murderer* is seized, and led to the tribunal of the judge. He professes to be penitent, and there is no reason to

question his sincerity. But do any think that his repentance should arrest the arm of the righteous law? He is condemned, and suffers death. If, then, the sentiments of men, confirming the conduct of God, proclaim the insufficiency of repentance to atone for iniquity, no rational hope can be entertained of its efficacy. We must look to another quarter; but where shall we look?

An extraordinary interposition of the Supreme Being appears necessary, and also a revelation of his will to give us information on the subject. Though it would be presumption in us to name every thing that a revelation will contain, we may say with confidence, it will be full and explicit as to the pardon of sin, and the method of a sinner's reconciliation with God. These are indispensably requisite. The New Testament does not disappoint our wishes or our hopes: it enters fully into all these difficulties, and proposes a remedy for every evil which we feel. *The doctrine of a mediator, and of redemption through him*, presents itself to our eyes in every page; and forms the very core of the Christian religion.[1] When the world had sinned, and the Almighty wished to reconcile them to himself, it was necessary to do this in such a way as should demonstrate both the guilt of sin and His hatred of it; and at the same time evince his love and compassion for sinners. A free pardon without an atonement would have been inconsistent with the majesty of the Divine Laws, and would have served as an encouragement to men to continue in sin. He therefore offered this pardon through a Mediator[2], *that so he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* (Rom. iii. 26.) This Mediator fully showed the heinousness of sin in the sight of God, from the sufferings he underwent in order to remove the guilt of it. Thus, what men had in all ages wished for in vain, — an atonement[3] for sin (which conscience and their natural notions of divine justice taught them to be necessary), — the sacred books point out in the death of Jesus; which, in consequence of the dignity of his person, our reason perceives to have been of sufficient value to expiate the guilt of innumerable millions. The reality and extent of the atonement or satisfaction made to divine justice by Jesus Christ are set forth in the strongest and most explicit language that can be conceived. Thus, he is said to have *died* FOR *us, to* BEAR *our sins, to* TAKE AWAY *our sins, to be a* PROPITIATION *for our sins,* and *to* PURCHASE, REDEEM, *or* RANSOM *us with the price of his blood.*

Christ died FOR *us*, or in our stead — *He laid down his life* FOR *us.* (1 John iii. 16.)—*He died* FOR *our sins.* (1 Cor. xv. 3.)—*He gave himself* FOR *us.* (Tit. ii. 14.)—*He was delivered* FOR *our offences.* (Rom. iv. 25.) *He tasted death* FOR *every man.* (Heb. ii. 9.)—Agree-

[1] Bogue's Essay on the Divine Authority of the New Testament, pp. 32. 34.

[2] On the appointment of a Mediator, and the redemption of the world by him, see the profound and conclusive Observations in Butler's Analogy. Part. ii. chap. 5.

[3] The whole subject of Jesus Christ's atonement is comprehensively discussed in Mr. Jerram's Treatise on the Doctrine of the Atonement (London, 1828. 8vo.); and in Dr. Dewar's Nature, Reality, and Efficacy of the Atonement (Edinburgh and London, 1831, 8vo.); and most fully and conclusively in Dr. Magee's unanswered and unanswerable Discourses and Dissertations on the Atonement; of which there are editions in two or three volumes, 8vo.; as also in the collective edition of the Archbishop's whole Works. (London, 1812. 2 vols. 8vo.)

ably to the prophecy concerning him, *He was wounded* FOR *our transgressions, and bruised* FOR *our iniquities.* (Isa. liii. 5.)— *Christ has* BORNE *our sins.—He was once offered to bear the sins of many.* (Heb. ix. 28.)— *He* BARE *our sins in his own body on the tree.* (1 Pet. ii. 24.) —Agreeably to the predictions concerning him, *He hath* BORNE *our griefs and* CARRIED *our sorrows: the Lord hath* LAID ON HIM *the iniquity of us all.* (Isa. liii. 4. 6)

Christ has TAKEN AWAY *our sins.—He was manifested to take* AWAY *our sins.* (1 John iii. 5.) – *He* PUT AWAY *sin by the sacrifice of himself.* (Heb. ix. 26.)—*He hath* WASHED *us from our sins in his own blood.* (Rev. i. 5.)—*The blood of Christ Jesus* CLEANSETH *us from all sin.* (1 John i. 7.)

Christ is a PROPITIATION *for our sins.—Him hath God set forth* to be a PROPITIATION, *through faith in his blood.* (Rom. iii. 25.)— *God sent his Son to be* THE PROPITIATION *for our sins.* (1 John iv. 10.)— *He is* THE PROPITIATION *for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.* (1 John ii. 2.)

Christ PURCHASED, REDEEMED, *or* RANSOMED *us with the price of his blood.— He* PURCHASED *the church of God with his own blood.* (Acts xx. 28.)— *He came to give his life a* RANSOM *for many.* (Matt. xx. 28.)— *He gave himself a* RANSOM *for all.* (1 Tim. ii. 6.)— *We are* BOUGHT *with a price.* (1 Cor. vi. 20.)—*In him we have* REDEMPTION *through his blood.* (Eph. i. 7.)—*He hath* REDEEMED *us to God by his blood.* (Rev. v. 9.)— *We are* REDEEMED *with the precious blood of Christ.* (1 Pet. i. 19.)

3. The divine justice being satisfied, we are assured of the FORGIVENESS OF OUR SINS through Christ, on sincere *repentance,* and unfeigned faith in him. His forerunner, John the Baptist, preached *the baptism of repentance for the* REMISSION OF SINS. (Luke iii. 3.)— Christ tells us, *his blood was shed for many for the* REMISSION OF SINS. (Matt. xxvi. 28.)—After the resurrection, the apostles are directed by him *to preach repentance and* REMISSION OF SINS *in his name among all nations.* (Luke xxiv. 47.)— Accordingly their preaching was this: *Him God hath exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and* FORGIVENESS OF SINS. (Acts v. 31.) —*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the* REMISSION OF SINS. (Acts ii. 38.) — *Through this man is preached unto you the* FORGIVENESS OF SINS. (Acts xiii. 38.)— *To him give all the prophets witness, that* through his name, *whosoever* BELIEVETH *in him shall receive* REMISSION OF SINS. (Acts x. 43.) — *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not* IMPUTING *their trespasses unto them.* (2 Cor. v. 19.)—*In him we have redemption through his blood, the* FORGIVENESS OF SINS. (Eph. i. 7.) — And we are commanded *to forgive one another, even as God,* for Christ's sake, *hath* FORGIVEN *us.* (Eph. iv. 32.)

4. Our sins being forgiven, we are JUSTIFIED by Christ in the sight of God. *By him all that believe are* JUSTIFIED. (Acts xiii. 39.) — *We are* JUSTIFIED *in the name of the Lord Jesus.* (1 Cor. vi. 11.) — *We are* JUSTIFIED *freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.* (Rom. iii. 24.) — *Being* JUSTIFIED *by his blood, we*

shall be saved from wrath through him. (Rom. v. 9.) — *God hath made him to be* sin (that is, a sin-offering,) *for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the* RIGHTEOUSNESS *of God in him.* (2 Cor. v. 21.) — *Even the* RIGHTEOUSNESS *of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.* (Rom. iii. 22.) — Therefore "we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own merits or deservings."[1]

Further, being JUSTIFIED by Christ, we are RECONCILED to God. *Being* JUSTIFIED *by faith, we have* peace *with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* (Rom. v. 1.) — *We are* RECONCILED *to God by the death of his Son.* (Rom. v. 10.) — *Us, who were enemies, hath Christ* RECONCILED *in the body of his flesh, through death.* (Col. i. 21, 22.) — *He hath made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to* RECONCILE *all things unto himself.* (Col. i. 20.) — *God hath* RECONCILED *us to himself by Jesus Christ* (2 Cor. v. 18.); — *Who suffered for sin, that he might* bring us *unto God.* (1 Pet. iii. 18.) — And, *we are* accepted *in the beloved.* (Eph. i. 6.)

5. Once more, in the Gospel we find the best principles of COMFORT AND REFRESHMENT TO THE SOUL under all the calamities and afflictions of life, as well as a rich magazine of all means proper for the sanctification of our souls, and our most successful advances in true piety. In the Scriptures we see that the Divine Spirit is ready with his mighty aids to assist, enlighten, and strengthen our spirits in proportion to our sincere desires and endeavours after godliness; and there we are directed every day, and at all times, to seek unto God through Christ, by fervent and believing prayer, for his guidance and protection, and are assured that we shall never seek his face in vain. For Jesus Christ, having reconciled us to God, SANCTIFIES the hearts of true believers by the Holy Spirit, in order to enable them to perform their duty, and to continue in the favour of God. *We are chosen to salvation through* SANCTIFICATION *of the Spirit* (2 Thess. ii. 13.), and *through* SANCTIFICATION *of the Spirit unto obedience.* (1 Pet. i. 2.) — *We are* SANCTIFIED, *through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.* (Heb. x. 10.) — *God hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto* HOLINESS, *who hath also given unto us his* HOLY SPIRIT. (1 Thess. iv. 7, 8.) — *The* SPIRIT OF GOD *dwelleth in us* (Rom. viii. 9.), *and our body is the* TEMPLE *of the* HOLY GHOST (1 Cor. vi. 19.), and *we are an habitation of God through the* SPIRIT. (Eph. ii. 22.) — *We are* RENEWED *by the* HOLY GHOST (Tit. iii. 5.) — and quickened *by the* SPIRIT (John vi. 63.) — and strengthened *with might by the* SPIRIT *in the inner man.* (Eph. iii. 16.) — And *it is through the* SPIRIT *that we mortify the deeds of the body* (Rom. viii. 13.) — by which deeds *we* grieve *and* quench *the* SPIRIT. (Eph. iv. 30.; 1 Thess. v. 19.)

He who assists us by his SPIRIT upon earth (Luke xi. 13.), to enable us to do the will of God, and thereby to continue in his favour, is our constant MEDIATOR, INTERCESSOR, and ADVOCATE with God

[1] Article xi. of the Confession of Faith of the Church of England.

in heaven, to present our prayers for the supply of our wants, and to obtain a compassionate regard to our failings and infirmities. *He is the* MEDIATOR *of the New Covenant.* (Heb. xii. 24.) — *There is one* MEDIATOR *between God and man, even the man Jesus Christ.* (1 Tim. ii. 5.) — *He makes* INTERCESSION *for us at the right hand of God.* (Rom. viii. 34.) — *He appears in the* presence *of God* FOR *us* (Heb. ix. 24.) — *No man cometh unto the Father but by him.* (John xiv. 6.)

He *is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God* by him, *seeing he ever liveth to make* INTERCESSION *for them.* (Heb. vii. 25.) — *If any man* sin *we have an* ADVOCATE *with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* (1 John ii. 1.) — He *is touched with the feeling of our* INFIRMITIES, and therefore *let us come* boldly to the throne of grace, *that we may find grace and mercy to help in time of need* (Heb. iv. 15, 16.) — and *let us* draw near *with a true heart, and full* assurance of faith. (Heb. x. 22.) — *In him we have* boldness, *and* access *with confidence.* (Eph. iii. 12.)

6. In favour of the IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL, a point so important, but which to the wisest of the Gentiles seemed so doubtful, the New Testament speaks in the most decisive language, and holds out to the hopes and fears of mankind rewards and punishments suited to their nature, and which it is worthy of God to dispense. In the Gospel we see the dead both small and great restored to life, and appearing before the tribunal of God, to receive a sentence "according to the deeds done in the body." The glories of heaven which are reserved "for them that love him," and the everlasting miseries which will be the terrible portion of all the wilfully impenitent workers of iniquity, are disclosed in the Scriptures; which alone set forth the true reason of our being in this world, viz. not for enjoyment, but for trial; not to gain temporal pleasures or possessions, but that our souls may be disciplined and prepared for immortal honour and glory. While the divine displeasure is declared against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and the most awful warnings are denounced against sinners, the means by which they may obtain mercy are clearly displayed and offered to them.[1] And as it is Jesus Christ who enables us to do the will of God and to preserve his favour in this life (for without him we can do nothing), so it is through him alone that we are made partakers of that eternal life and immortality, which he has illustrated in the Gospel. *The Father sent the Son to be the* SAVIOUR *of the world* (1 John iv. 14.) — *to seek and to* SAVE *that which was lost* (Luke xix. 10.) — *that we might* LIVE *through him* (1 John iv. 9.) — *that the world through him might be* SAVED (John iii. 17.) — *that believing, we might have* LIFE *through his name* (John xx. 31.) — *that whosoever believeth in him should not* perish, *but have* EVERLASTING LIFE. (John iii. 16.) — Through *him we are* SAVED *from wrath.* — *He hath* DELIVERED *us from the wrath to come.* (1 Thess. i. 10.; Rom. v. 9.) — ETERNAL LIFE *is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* (Rom. vi. 23.) — *God hath given us*

[1] Compare John v. 28, 29.; 1 Cor. xv. 12—20.; 2 Cor. v. 10.; Matt. xxv. 31—34. 41. 46.; Rev. xx. 11—13.; Mark ix. 43, 44.; Rev. xiv. 10, 11., xxii. 12.; John xiv. 2, 3.; 2 Cor v. 1.; 1 Pet. i. 4.; Rev. xxi. 4., xxii. 3—6.; 1 John iii. 2.

ETERNAL LIFE, *and this* LIFE *is in his Son* (1 John v. 11.) — *who is the captain of our salvation* (Heb. ii. 10.) — *the author of* ETERNAL SALVATION *to all them that obey him* (Heb. v. 9.): — *Neither is there* SALVATION *in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be* SAVED.[1] (Acts iv. 12.)

Such is the system of doctrine promulgated in the New Testament by the apostles of Jesus Christ. But whence did they derive their knowledge? They have given us a full view of human nature; and have exposed in the clearest light the depravity, guilt, and misery of man. They have, at the same time, pointed out a method of deliverance from all these evils. Their system is wonderfully ingenious: it is original: it is adapted to the condition of human nature: it is a remedy perfect and complete. They say that they had all their knowledge of religion from Jesus Christ. But whence did Jesus Christ derive it? Those who deny his divine mission will find it difficult to account for his knowledge. There is something in his scheme unspeakably superior to every other. It takes in the rights of God, as well as the necessities of man; and renders God glorious in all his perfections, as well as man completely happy. Who besides, in ancient or modern times, ever conceived so vast an idea? But Jesus had no literary education. Perhaps the Old Testament was the only book he ever read. He never associated with the philosophers: his companions were not the chief priests, and elders, and scribes. Let the deist sit down and assign a satisfactory reason for the vast superiority of the Gospel. The Christian is free from difficulty; for he reads in the sacred page, and he believes that "Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, and hath declared him unto us." (John i. 18.)[2]

Finally, all the doctrines to which the Gospel requires our assent are agreeable to unprejudiced reason; every one of them has a natural tendency and direct influence to reform the manners of men; and all together make up the *most rational and consistent belief in the world.* To instance only a few particulars: — What can be a more excellent foundation of religion than the Christian doctrine concerning the nature and attributes of the only true God? What so certain a preservative against idolatry, as the doctrine, that all things were made by him? What can be so sure a ground of piety as the Christian doctrine of providence? What a greater encouragement to holiness than that God has made a revelation of his will to instruct men in that practice? What doctrine is so admirably suited to all the ends of religion as that of the incarnation of the Son of God? Which way could men have been so sensible of God's love, and have been instructed in divine truth so well, as by sending his only Son? How could the honour of the Divine Laws be vindicated, and such an assurance of pardon been given to men, as by this method of the Son of God giving himself a sacrifice for sin? What could be a more glorious manifestation of the mercy of God; what more effectual to

[1] Bp. Gibson's Pastoral Letters, Lett. 2. (in Bp. Randolph's Enchiridion, vol. iv. pp. 160—166. first edition.)

[2] Bogue's Essay on the Divine Authority of the New Testament, p. 38.

deter men from sin, and to exhibit to them its heinous nature, and God's hatred against it, and the indispensable necessity of obeying his laws, than this expedient of saving sinners by the sacrifice of his Son? How could men be better encouraged to a religious life than by having such a Mediator to obtain pardon for their frailties, and by being assured of the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to enable them to conquer their corrupt affections? In fine, what more powerful motive to persuade men to live virtuously than the certainty of a future judgment? Vain men may value themselves upon their speculative knowledge, right opinions, and true belief; BUT NO BELIEF WILL BE OF ADVANTAGE TO THEM WHICH IS SEPARATE FROM THE PRACTICE OF HOLINESS.

Lastly, all the doctrines of the Christian faith make up an infinitely more *consistent and rational scheme of belief* than the wisest of the ancient philosophers ever *did*, or the most cunning of modern unbelievers *can*, invent. The philosophers were never able to make out a coherent scheme of things, and the modern deists cannot frame to themselves any consistent and fixed principle, as we have already seen.[1] There have, indeed, been disputes among Christians, but they have not been like those among the philosophers, concerning the supreme good of man, but only explications of particular doctrines, which do not affect religion itself, and ought not to hinder the good effect which the fundamental doctrines ought to have upon the lives of men.

III. Admirably as the doctrines of the New Testament are adapted to the actual condition and wants of mankind, the MORAL PRECEPTS which it enjoins are not less calculated to promote their happiness and well-being, both collectively and individually. In it the best descriptions of virtue are to be found: and the whole volume is replete with piety and with devotional virtues, which were utterly unknown to the ancient heathen moralists. Indeed, the view of human duty, exhibited by them, was not only radically defective and materially erroneous; but the manner of its exhibition was little calculated to impress the mind, affect the heart, or influence the conduct. Abstruse reasonings upon the fitness of things—general declarations concerning the beauty of virtue—cold and inanimate precepts of conduct, if not contradicted, yet imperfectly exemplified in their own behaviour[2]—might in some degree exercise their pupils' faculties of reasoning and memory, and render them subtle disputants, and pompous declaimers; but they had little tendency to enlighten their minds in the knowledge of moral truth, and to imbue their hearts with the love of moral excellence. It is far otherwise with the morality of the Scriptures, and especially of the New Testament. While the system of moral truth, which they evolve, is incomparably more pure than that of the heathen moralist, it is not, like his, couched in cold generalities or in abstract uninteresting language. It is pure and rational, alike remote from the overstrained precepts of superstition and enthusiasm, and the loose compliant maxims of worldly policy. It

[1] See pp. 4—29. *suprà.* [2] See pp. 11—15. *suprà.*

comes home to men's business and bosoms. It is deeply impressive, and it is perfectly intelligible. It is calculated for every rank and order of society, and speaks with equal strictness and authority to the rich and honourable, to the poor and ignoble. All other systems of morals prohibit actions but not thoughts, and therefore are necessarily ineffectual. But the moral system of Christianity, infinitely superior to all the defective systems of men [1], pervades every thought of the heart; teaches us to refer all our actions to the will of our Creator; and corrects all selfishness in the human character, by teaching us to have in view the happiness of all around us, and enforcing the most enlarged and diffusive benevolence.

With this general notice of Christian morality we might conclude the present section, especially as the New Testament is in the hands of almost every one: but, since that volume (as well as the Old Testament) has been arraigned by opposers of revelation in the present day as the most *immoral* book that is extant, a short view of the morality of the Gospel dispensation, and of the manner in which it is announced, becomes necessary, in order to enable the Christian reader to give a reason of the hope that is in him. The moral precepts of the Gospel may be referred to the duties incumbent upon man in civil and social life, and to the duties which he owes to himself.

1. With regard to the duties incumbent upon MAN TOWARDS HIS FELLOW-CREATURES, the Gospel requires that we offer not the least injury or wrong to others, in their persons, their properties, or their reputations; that we render unto all their just dues; that we lie not one to another, but speak every man truth unto his neighbour, and provide things honest in the sight of all man. All fraud and falsehood in our words and dealings, together with all injustice and violence, are most expressly forbidden. (Rom. xiii. 7, 8.; Eph. iv. 25.; 2 Cor. viii. 21.) Not only are we to abstain from injurious actions, but we are required not to be angry at our brother without a cause; to speak evil of no man, and neither to raise evil reports ourselves against our neighbours, nor spread them abroad when raised by others. (Matt. v. 21, 22.; Tit. iii. 2. with Psal. xv. 3.) Further, we are forbidden to pass rash judgments upon others, lest we ourselves should be judged by God; on the contrary, we are to put the best constructions upon their words which the case will bear. (Matt. vii. 1, 2.; Rom. xiv. 10.; 1 Cor. xii. 5. 7.; James iv. 11.) And Jesus Christ has inculcated it in the strongest manner, that no seeming acts of piety and devotion, or diligence in the ritual observances of religion, will compensate for the wrongs or injuries done to our neighbours, nor will they be accepted by God without making reparation, as far as is in our power, for those injuries and wrongs. (Matt. v. 23, 24., xxiii. 23.)

Nor does the Gospel enjoin a merely negative morality; it enforces upon us, in the most explicit terms, the duty of doing good to all men, as far as we have ability and opportunity. Thus, we are

[1] There is an excellent discourse on the superiority of the morality of the New Testament over the defective systems of men, in pp. 106—125. of Lectures on the "Evidences of Christianity." Dundee, 1849. 8vo.

required to assist them in their necessities and distresses, to sympathise with them in their afflictions and sorrows, as well as to rejoice in their prosperity; to be ready to distribute to their necessities out of our wordly substance; to endeavour to convert them from the error of their way, and to reprove them, when guilty of faults, in the spirit of meekness; and, finally, to do all we can to promote their temporal and spiritual welfare. The more effectually to show the great importance of the duties of charity and mercy, Jesus Christ assures us that particular notice will be taken of them, at the great day of judgment, and that men shall then be rewarded or condemned according to their abounding in, or their neglecting of, the practice of those duties. (Gal. vi. 10.; 1 Tim. vi. 18.; Heb. xiii. 3. 16.; James v. 20.; Gal. vi. 1.; Rom. xii. 15.; Matt. xxv. 31—46.)

Further, as the most difficult part of the duty required of us towards mankind relates to the temper and conduct we are to observe towards our enemies, and those who have injured us, Jesus Christ has given us in this respect the most admirable precepts and directions. If we have suffered injuries from others, he enjoins us to exercise a forgiving temper towards them, and not to give way to the bitterness of revenge; and requires us to insert it in our petitions to God, that he would forgive us our sins, as we forgive others the offences committed against us. The same is the design of some of his excellent parables. And in this, as well as other instances, the apostles taught the same doctrine with their divine Lord and Master, that we should recompense to no man evil for evil, and instead of being overcome of evil, should overcome evil with good. (Rom. xii. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.; 1 Thess. v. 15.; 1 Pet. iii. 9.) To these precepts we may add, that Jesus Christ not only forbids the rendering of evil for evil, but commands us to render good for evil. This is the design of that glorious precept, by which we are commanded to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us. Instead of cursing, we must pray to God for them, not indeed that they may go on and prosper in their evil courses, but that they may be brought to a right temper of mind, and so may become the objects of the divine favour; and if they be reduced to distress, we must be ready to assist and serve them in the kind offices of humanity. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." (Matt. v. 43, 44.; Rom. xii. 20.) And this certainly is carrying benevolence to the noblest height. And though there have been high pretenders to reason who have found fault with it, yet some of the most eminent among the ancient philosophers have been sensible of the beauty and excellency of such a conduct, but they wanted the authority necessary to make it a law obligatory on mankind. But in the Gospel of Jesus it is more strongly enforced, urged with more powerful motives than it ever was before, and is bound upon us by a most express divine authority. To this it may be added, that our Lord has expressly condemned that spirit which urges men to persecute and do hurt to others, under pretence of zeal for the cause of God and religion. (Luke ix. 54, 55, 56.)

Upon the whole, it is the manifest and uniform design and tendency of the Gospel of Jesus to recommend and enforce universal benevolence. It lays the foundation of the duties we owe to mankind in love. It is there given as a comprehensive summary of the duties we owe to mankind: *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* (Matt. xxii. 39.; Rom. xiii. 8, 9.; Jam. ii. 8.) And by our neighbour we are taught to understand, not merely those of the same country, nation, and religion with ourselves, but all of the human race that stand in need of our kindness, and to whom we have an opportunity of doing good. This is beautifully exemplified by our Saviour, in the parable of the good Samaritan. (Luke x. 33, 34, 35.) To which may be added that other remarkable precept, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.* (Matt. vii. 12.) A rule which, if rightly considered, would be of great use in regulating our conduct towards our fellow-creatures.

But though we are required to love and do good to all men, the design is not, as some who are desirous to impeach the Gospel morality would insinuate, that we should have the same degree of affection for all. The special love and esteem which good men should have for one another, and the peculiar ties by which they are united, in addition to the common ties of humanity, are recommended and enforced in the strongest and most engaging manner, and lay the properest foundation for all the intimacies of sacred friendship. (John xiii. 34, 35.; Gal. vi. 10.; Eph. iv. 1—6.; Phil. ii. 1—5.; 1 Pet. i. 22.; 1 John iii. 16.)

2. Besides the general precepts prescribing the duties of justice and benevolence towards all mankind, there are also particular injunctions given us, with respect to the DUTIES INCUMBENT UPON US IN THE SEVERAL STATIONS AND RELATIONS WHICH WE SUSTAIN IN CIVIL AND SOCIAL LIFE; and these are of great importance to the welfare of nations, families, and particular persons.

The grand design of the New Testament, it has been well observed, is to teach religion. "What relates to civil institutions, it notices only so far as moral obligation is concerned. *Forms* of government it leaves to the wisdom of men to regulate, and to nations to frame; but what the *spirit* of governments should be, it plainly dictates; and it lays down the principles, by which both governors and governed ought to regulate their conduct, with authority, plainness, and fidelity, and yet with a delicacy suited to the age in which it was written, and to the jealousy of the governments which then existed.[1] Civil government, the New Testament says, is an ordinance of God; in other words, it is the will of God that men should not live as the beasts of the field, without control; but that they should be formed into societies regulated by laws, and that these laws should be executed by magistrates appointed for the purpose. What kind of government and what kind of rules are intended, the sacred writers thus particularly specify: — *They are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do that which is good, and thou shalt have*

[1] Both Paul and Peter wrote during the reign of the sanguinary emperor Nero.

praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is a minister of God, and avenger to execute wrath, sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. They are God's ministers attending to this very thing[1], that is, their talents and their time are wholly employed in this great and good work. Such are the principles of government laid down in the New Testament; and such the duties which it prescribes to the rulers and magistrates of nations.

"But Christianity does not confine its injunctions to one part of the community, and leave the rest to act as they please; it addresses itself likewise with equal energy to the *people*, and binds on their consciences the obligations of subjection and obedience. Subjects are taught to be *submissive* and obedient *to the higher powers; to pray* for them; *to fear God and honour the king; to give unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; to render tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear;* HONOUR TO WHOM HONOUR; and to do all this not merely because the civil laws require it, and for fear of punishment from men, but for conscience-sake, and in obedience to the laws of God. (Matt. xxii. 21.; Rom. xiii. 1, 2. 5, 6, 7.; 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.; Tit. iii. 1.; 1 Pet. ii. 13—15.) Are not these injunctions highly reasonable, and exactly corresponding with the nature and state of things? If the members of a community refuse to honour and obey the divine ordinance, to be subject to government, to give high respect to rulers, or to pay them tribute,—and all this, not from fear of punishment, but for conscience-sake,—it will be allowed by every rational man, that they resist an ordinance of God, an ordinance that is both reasonable and beneficial, and deservedly receive to themselves condemnation."[2]

Such is the doctrine of the New Testament respecting civil government; such are its grand moral principles, and such its specific declarations on the subject. In every domestic relation it also lays down, fairly and equitably, the duties on both sides, viz. of servants and masters, of husbands and wives, of parents and children.

Thus, servants are enjoined, as a necessary part of religion, to obey and serve their masters, with all proper respect, fidelity, and diligence, not purloining, not answering again, with good will doing service as unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, that shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. These things, when really believed and duly considered, will have a much stronger influence to engage them to a faithful and cheerful discharge of their duty, than mere custom, or the laws of the country. On the other hand, masters are required to give unto their servants that which is just and equal, forbearing threatenings, knowing that they also have a master in heaven, and that with him there is no respect of persons. (Eph. vi. 5—9.; Col.

[1] Rom. xiii. 1. 3, 4.; 1 Pet. ii. 14.

[2] Bogue on the Divine Authority of the New Testament, pp. 221—224. There is an admirable discourse on "Christian Obedience to Civil Rulers" in Mr. Gisborne's Sermons principally designed to illustrate and enforce Christian Morality, pp. 237—258.

iii. 22—25., iv. 1.; 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2.; Tit. ii. 2. 9, 10, 11.) The duties of husbands and wives, of parents and children, are also admirably delineated and enforced. (Eph. v. 22—33.; Col. iii. 18, 19.; Tit. ii. 4, 5.; 1 Pet. iii. 7.; Eph. vi. 1-4.; Col. iii. 20, 21.; 1 Tim. v. 4—8.) In like manner, superiors and inferiors, the elder and younger, the rich and the poor, are directed to a proper conduct towards one another; and rules are given which tend to regulate the deportment of equals among themselves, that they should be courteous, in honour preferring one another, not willingly giving offence to any, and endeavouring as far as possible to live peaceably with all men. (Rom. xii. 10. 12. 18.; 1 Cor. x. 32.; Phil. ii. 3.; 1 Pet. ii. 17., iii. 8., v. 5.) In a word, all the various offices of humanity, justice, and charity, due from one man to another, are frequently described in the sacred writings, enforced by the most powerful motives, and by the authority of God himself; which, where it is firmly believed, must come with greater force upon the conscience, than the mere institutions of human legislators, or the reasonings of philosophers and moralists.

3. The preceding hints may serve to convey an idea of the excellency of the Scripture precepts with respect to the moral duties we owe to mankind in a civil and social state. With respect to that part of our duty which relates more immediately to ourselves, to the GOVERNING OF OUR AFFECTIONS, passions, and appetites, and to the due regulation and improvement of our temper, the Gospel law is peculiarly excellent. While it prohibits all angry passions, as above remarked, it enforces the lovely duties of meekness, forbearance, and long-suffering; and recommends, above all, the cultivation of that friendly temper and universal benevolence, which is one of the most amiable and excellent dispositions of the human heart. (Eph. iv. 26, 27. 31, 32.; Col. iii. 12—14.; 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5.) Wherever the Gospel is sincerely believed and embraced, it inspires the utmost abhorrence of those unnatural lusts and impurities which had made so monstrous a progress in various parts of the heathen world at the time of Christ's coming into the world, and which, as we have seen, were countenanced by the precepts and practice of the most distinguished sages of antiquity.[1] Not only adultery, fornication (which among the ancient heathens was reputed to be a very slight fault, if a fault at all), polygamy, and divorces upon slight occasions, but likewise all manner of uncleanness and lasciviousness, and the cherishing and indulgence of all impure inclinations, are strictly prohibited. (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.; 1 Tim. i. 9, 10.; 1 Thess. iv. 3, 4, 5. 7.; 1 Cor. vi. 13—20.; Matt. v. 27, 28.

Further, we are frequently warned against rioting and drunkenness, which tend to debase and dishonour our nature. (Luke xxi. 34.; Gal. v. 19. 21.; Eph. v. 6.; 1 Pet. ii. 11.) And it is particularly worthy of observation that, while the Gospel enforces chastity, purity, and temperance, by the most sacred obligations, care is taken to guard against superstitious extremes. Neither Christ nor his apostles sub-

[1] See pp. 13, 14. *suprà.*

stituted fervency of devotion in the place of morality; nor, under pretence of extraordinary purity, have they forbidden and condemned marriage, as some of the Essenes then did, and as others by a false refinement have since done. On the contrary, it is declared that *marriage is honourable in all.* (1 Cor. vii. 9.; Heb. xiii. 4.) And though all intemperance and excess are expressly forbidden, and we are required to subdue the passions and appetites, yet we are allowed the moderate use of sensible enjoyments; and it is declared that *every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.* (1 Tim. iv. 3—5.)

Another instance of the excellency of the Gospel precepts is, that particular care is taken to guard us against an immoderate passion for worldly riches, the precariousness of which is illustrated, together with the inconsistency of a predominant love of worldly wealth with the love of God and with real piety and virtue. The possession and enjoyment of riches are not absolutely prohibited; but we are directed to make a proper use of them, and to regard them as a trust committed to us by God, of which we are only the stewards, and for which we must be accountable. We are instructed to employ them, not as incentives to luxury, but as opportunities of doing good, of honouring God, and being useful to mankind. (Matt. vi. 24.; Mark x. 24.; Luke xii. 15—21.; 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.; Luke xvi. 9, 10.; 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.)

No disposition is more hateful to man than pride, which is represented as odious in the sight of God. (James iv. 6.) Many passages in the Gospel are particularly designed to correct and subdue it in all its various branches and appearances, whether it signifies an inordinate ambition which puts men upon contending who should be greatest, or an eager thirst after the applause of men rather than the favour and approbation of God, or a presumptous, haughty arrogance, and a high conceit of ourselves and our own righteousness, and a contempt of others; never was an amiable humility recommended and enforced in such an engaging manner as by Jesus Christ, who also gave the most perfect and lovely pattern of it in his own example. (Matt. xxiii. 6—12.; Mark ix. 33—35.; Luke xviii. 9—14.; John v. 44.; Matt. xi. 29.; John xiii. 12—17.; Phil. ii. 3—7.; 1 Pet. v. 5.) And as nothing tends more to discompose and disturb the mind than anxious cares or excessive sorrows and desponding fears, the Gospel provides the most effectual remedies against all these; not by representing worldly evils and calamities as no evils at all, or prescribing an unfeeling apathy, and suppressing the natural affections and passions, but by keeping them within proper bounds. Nowhere are there such powerful considerations for supporting us under afflictions and adversities with a calm resignation and a lively hope. We are taught to regard them as sent by God for the wisest and best purposes, and are assured that he will graciously support us under them, and overrule them to our greater benefit, and that if duly improved they shall issue in a complete, everlasting felicity. (Matt. v. 4.; Rom. v. 4, 5., viii. 18. 28.; 2 Cor. iv. 17.; Heb. xii. 5—12.) Nothing can

possibly be better fitted to deliver us from anxious distracting cares and solicitudes, and a distrustful thoughtfulness for to-morrow, than the excellent precepts and directions given us by Christ and his apostles. (Matt. vi. 25—34.; Luke xii. 22—31.; Phil. iv. 6. 11, 12.; 1 Tim. vi. 6. 8.; Heb. xiii. 5.; 1 Pet. v. 7.) But though we are directed to cast our cares upon God in a cheerful and steady dependence upon his wise and good providence, yet we are cautioned not to neglect the use of proper means and endeavours on our parts. It is urged as our duty not to be slothful in business, to exercise ourselves with diligence in the work of our several callings and employments, that we may have lack of nothing, and may have to give to him that needeth. Those who lead idle lives are represented as walking disorderly; and it is declared, that if any man will not work, neither should he eat. (Rom. xii. 11.; Eph. iv. 28.; 1 Thess. iv. 11, 12.; 2 Thess. iii. 10—12.) To this it may be added, that the precepts and instructions of Christ are admirably fitted to inspire us with a truly divine fortitude, and to raise us above the slavish fear of men (who can only kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do), or of any worldly evils and sufferings. And yet he is far from encouraging a forward enthusiastic rashness; he directs his disciples not needlessly to expose themselves to dangers, but to take all proper precautions for avoiding the rage and malice of their persecutors (Matt. vii. 6., x. 16. 23.); but when this could not be done without betraying the cause of God, of truth, and righteousness, they were to exert a noble fortitude, and to endure the greatest sufferings with constancy and even with joy, being assured of divine supports, and that great should be their reward in heaven. (Matt. v. 10—12.; Luke xii 4, 5.; 1 Pet. iii. 14., iv. 12, 13.)

As knowledge is one of the noblest improvements of the mind, and of the greatest advantage to a life of piety and virtue, it is frequently urged upon us as our duty to endeavour to get our minds furnished with divine and useful knowledge. And the knowledge there required is not merely of the speculative notional kind, or science falsely so called, but such a knowledge of those things which are of the highest importance to our happiness, as may help us to make a progress in all holiness and goodness: we must endeavour to grow in wisdom and spiritual understanding, so as to discern the things which are excellent, and to prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. (John xvii. 3.; Phil. i. 9, 10.; Rom. xii. 2.; Eph. v. 17.; Col. i. 9, 10.; 1 Thess. v. 21.; Tit. i. 1.) Finally, it is required of us that we make it our continued endeavour to grow in grace, and in every divine virtue; for which purpose we must live and walk by faith, *which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.* And as future life and immortality are now brought into the most clear and open light, we are required to carry our desires and views beyond this transitory world and all its enjoyments, and to seek the things which are above, and place our choicest affections there. (2 Cor. v. 7.; Col. iii. 1, 2.; Heb. xiii. 14.) Accordingly, the Christian life is represented under the noble image of a conversation with heaven, and communion with the Father, and

with his Son Jesus Christ: it is a continual aspiring towards the perfection of our nature in a conformity to the divine goodness and purity, and an endeavour to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven. (Phil. iii. 20.; 1 John i. 3.; Phil. iii. 12—14.) To all which may be added that it is the distinguishing character of the religion of Jesus, that while it directs us to aspire to the highest degree of moral excellence, it teaches us to maintain a constant sense of our own weaknesses and defects, and of our insufficiency in ourselves. In the Gospel all boasting and confidence in our own righteousness and merits is excluded; and we are instructed to place our whole dependence upon the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, giving him the glory of every good thing that is in us, or which we are enabled to perform."[1]

4. In reviewing the leading features of Christian Morality, the *holiness* of its precepts is a circumstance that demands especial consideration, and is a proof that the religion which inculcates it came from God. All its precepts aim directly at the heart. It never goes about to form the *exterior* of man. To merely external duties it is a stranger. It forms the lives of men no otherwise than by forming their dispositions. It never addresses itself to their vanity, selfishness, or any other corrupt propensity. On the contrary, it declares open war and irreconcileable enmity against *every* evil disposition in the human heart. It tolerates none. Of the most odious sins, such as disobedience to parents, dishonesty, injustice, and murder, it speaks with abhorrence. It says that they ought not even to be named among Christians. But this is not all. It descends into the heart: it puts forth its hand and plucks out every root of bitterness, which, springing up, would pollute the soul and defile the life. Many principles which the world approves, and on many occasions considers to be harmless, — as ambition, the eager pursuit of wealth, fondness for pleasure, pride, envy, revenge, contempt of others, and a disposition to filthy jesting, — the Gospel condemns in every form and degree. It forbids the indulgence of them even in thought; it prohibits the adultery of the eye, and the murder of the heart; and commands the desire to be strangled in its birth. Neither the hands, the tongue, the head, nor the heart must be guilty of one iniquity. However the world may applaud the heroic ambition of one, the love of glory in another, the successful pursuits of affluence in a third, the high-minded pride, the glowing patriotism which would compel all the neighbouring nations to bow the neck, the steady pursuit of revenge for injuries received, and a sovereign contempt of the rude and ignoble vulgar, — Christianity condemns them all, and enjoins the disciples of Jesus to crucify them without delay. Not one is to be spared, though dear as a right eye for use or pleasure, or even necessary as a right hand for defence or labour. The Gospel does not press men to consider what their fellow-men may think of them, or how it will affect their temporal interest; but what is right, and what is necessary to their well-being. "If you comply with its precepts

[1] Leland's Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, vol. ii. pp. 209—219.

you must *be*, and not merely *seem to be*. It is the heart that is required; and all the different prescribed forms of worship and obedience are but so many varied expressions or modifications of it."[1]

Now, is any thing like this to be found in the writings of the opposers of revelation? No. Their morality, we have seen, has no standard; and their code of morals is, in fact, subversive of all morality.[2] Their deity seems to take no cognisance of the heart. According to them, "there is no merit or crime in the intention." Their morality only goes to form the exterior of the man. It allows the utmost scope for wicked desires, provided they be not carried into execution to the injury of society; and, according to their code (as recently promulgated), the assassination of a person, who for some political reason may become obnoxious, is a laudable act; the prohibition of the unlawful intercourse between the sexes is a perversion of the "plainest dictates of nature;" and decayed old age is not worth the pains and expense bestowed in supporting it!!

It is worthy of notice that the Gospel inculcates the purest worship of God, and filial reliance upon his mercy and goodness; but amid all the discordant theories of morals which have been contrived by modern opposers of revelation, they are unanimous in excluding the Divine Being from their systems of ethics, thus evincing that they are *deists* in theory, *pagans* in inclination, and *atheists* in practice.

"The words of Scripture are spirit and life. They are the language of *love*. Every exhortation of Christ and his apostles is impregnated with this spirit. Let the reader turn to the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans for an example, and read it carefully: let him find, if he can, any thing in the purest part of the writings of deists that is worthy of being compared with it. No: virtue itself is no longer virtue in their hands. It loses its charms, when they affect to embrace it. Their touch is that of the cold hand of death. The most lovely object is deprived by it of life and beauty, and reduced to a shrivelled mass of inactive formality."[3]

5. The last circumstance to be considered in reviewing the morality of the Gospel is, the *manner* in which it is delivered to us. While the ancient sages confined their precepts to their respective pupils, they disregarded the multitude, for whose moral instruction no provision was made; and however excellent many of their precepts were, still they were destitute of sufficient weight and authority to enforce their instructions, and not unfrequently their conduct was directly opposed to their precepts. But the precepts of the Gospel are perfectly natural, and eminently adapted to the state of every class of society, and calculated to promote the real happiness of all men. Simplicity and plainness are the characteristics of all Christ's discourses; and appear not only in the language he employed, but also in the allusions and illustrations by which he enforced or recommended his doctrines or moral precepts.

[1] Bogue's Essay on the Divine Authority of the New Testament, p. 74. Fuller's Gospel its own Witness, p. 27.
[2] See pp. 28, 29. *suprà*.
[3] Fuller's Gospel its own Witness, p. 42.

Of the simplicity and plainness of language which pervades the discourses of Jesus Christ, as well as of clear and definite instruction in moral duty, we have a complete model in his sermon on the mount. In that discourse no article is introduced which he leaves either doubtful or ambiguous. Not only does he distinctly expound the prohibitions of the ancient law, but he also places, in opposition to the things prohibited, a variety of duties which neither the terms of the law nor the explanations of the Jews had ever expressly recognised. He applies the law of duty to the secret thoughts and dispositions of the heart, as much as to the control or regulation of external conduct; and opposes the genuine spirit of pure and practical morality to all the loose and pernicious tenets, by which false or incompetent instructors perverted the people, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. The same plainness of language characterises all the other discourses of Jesus Christ, as well as the practical parts of the apostolic writings.

The simplicity and plainness of Christ's manner are likewise conspicuous in the nature of his allusions and instructions; all of which were derived from objects familiar to the apprehension of mankind at large. This is obvious to every reader of his discourses. *The city set on a hill,* — *the salt of the earth,* — *the candle which is not to be set under a bushel, but upon a candlestick,* — *the vine and the branches,* — *the shepherd and the sheep,* — are instances which cannot be forgotten. These and similar examples are the happiest of all allusions, and the best of all illustrations. They are natural but forcible; every where offering themselves, and every where beautiful; familiar, but possessed of sufficient dignity; and always attended with this high recommendation, that they are easily understood by men in every situation of life.

The same plainness and simplicity of manner are also evinced in the parables delivered by Christ. Instruction appears to have been communicated in allegorical discourses generally resembling these, from the earliest ages; but no instructor ever framed them so happily as Christ. The subjects to which he alludes are chosen with supreme felicity; and the allusions are conducted with the utmost skill and success. The allegorical part of the story is always just and impressive, commonly beautiful, not unfrequently sublime, and in several instances eminently pathetic. The meaning, which it is intended to convey, is at the same time definite, clear, and obvious. The parable, instead of shading the thought, illumines it; and, instead of leaving the reader in doubt, contributes not a little to the satisfaction of his inquiries. When we consider the perplexed and enigmatical manner in which the Jewish and Gentile teachers, at that time, conveyed many of their important instructions, we shall on the one hand see this characteristic of our Saviour's discourses in a stronger light; and on the other shall be led to admire the wisdom with which, in this respect, he taught mankind.[1]

[1] Dwight's System of Theology, vol. ii. p. 280. The three discourses in that volume on the character of Christ as a prophet are particularly valuable for their originality of thought and the interesting manner in which the subject is treated. Many beautiful ob-

While pride and vanity were the general characteristics of the Jewish and Gentile teachers, Christ exhibited in his manner of teaching the most perfect modesty and delicacy, blended with the utmost boldness and integrity. While he exposed the corruption of doctrine, and hypocrisy in practice, of the Scribes and Pharisees, with such clearness of evidence and such pungency of reproof, that they themselves often shrunk from the detection, and trembled for the very existence of their principles and their power, not a word, not a sentiment, fell from his lips which either could or can give pain to a mind of the most finished refinement and virtue; not a word, not a sentiment, has been uttered that can awaken one improper thought, or allure in the least degree to any improper action.

The weight of his precepts, and the manner in which they were inculcated, imparted to Christ's teaching a degree of authority peculiar to himself, and extorted from his adversaries the confession, *Never man spake like this man.* (John vii. 46.) At the same time, he uniformly displayed towards his disciples the utmost kindness, gentleness, and patience; bearing with their weaknesses and infirmities, often reiterating the same instructions, removing their prejudices, and giving full force and effect to all his doctrines and precepts.

The character of Jesus Christ, indeed, forms an essential part of the morality of the Gospel. To the character of almost every other teacher of morals some stain or defect attaches; but he is charged with no vice either by friends or enemies.[1]

In each of the four narratives of the life of Jesus, besides the absence of every appearance of vice, we perceive traces of devotion, humility, benignity, mildness, patience, and prudence: which qualities are to be collected from incidental circumstances, as the terms are themselves never used concerning Christ in the Gospels, nor is any formal character of him drawn in any part of the New Testament.

servations on the character and manner of Christ as a teacher occur in Bp. Law's Considerations on the Theory of Religion, pp. 339—364. 8vo. London, 1820; and also in Mr. Simpson's Internal and Presumptive Evidences, pp. 332—524. See also Bp. Newton's Dissertation on the Eloquence of Jesus Christ (Works, vol. iv. pp. 86—104.); Archbishop Newcome's Observations on our Lord's Conduct as a Divine Instructor, and on the Excellence of his Moral Character, 4to. or 8vo.; and especially Bp. Sumner's work, intitled "The Ministerial Character of Christ practically considered." 8vo. London, 1824.

[1] Nothing can be more honourable to the character of Jesus Christ than the character and conduct of Judas Iscariot, which furnish us with a strong argument for the truth of the Gospel.—How came it to pass, that he first betrayed his Master, and then was so stung with remorse, as to put an end to his own life by hanging himself? How came he thus to own himself guilty of the vilest sin, if he knew that he had done an act of justice to the world, by freeing it from an impostor? For, if Jesus was not really what he professed to be, he deserved all and much more than Judas was the means of bringing upon him. Now, if there had been any base plot, any bad design, or any kind of imposture in the case, it must have been known to Judas, who had lived so long with Christ, and had even been intrusted with the bag (which shows that he was not treated with any reserve), and who was acquainted with our Saviour's most private life; and if he had known of any blemish in his character or conduct, he ought to have told it, and would have told it:—duty to God, to his own character and to the world, obliged him to it; but his silence in this respect bears the most decisive testimony to Christ's innocence; Judas's death and perdition prove Christ's divine authority. See Dr. Ranken's Institutes of Theology, pp. 370—379. and also the Rev. John Bonar's Observations on the Character and Conduct of Judas Iscariot, 8vo. Edinburgh, 1750, or 12mo. 1823, for a clear and masterly view of the testimony of Judas, as an evidence of Christ's innocence and divinity, and of the truth and inspiration of Scripture.

"Thus, we see the *devoutness* of his mind in his frequent retirement to solitary prayer (Matt. xiv. 23., Luke ix. 28., Matt. xxvi. 36.); in his habitual giving of thanks (Matt. xi. 25., Mark viii. 7., John vi. 23., Luke xxii. 17.); in his reference of the beauties and operations of nature to the bounty of Providence (Matt. vi. 26—28.); in his earnest addresses to his Father, more particularly that short but solemn one before the raising of Lazarus from the dead (John xi. 41.); and in the deep piety of his behaviour in the garden, on the last evening of his life (Matt. xxvi. 36—47.); his *humility*, in his constant reproof of contentions for superiority (Mark ix. 33.); the *benignity* and affectionateness of his temper, in his kindness to children (Mark x. 16.); in the tears which he shed over his falling country (Luke xix. 41.), and upon the death of his friend (John xi. 35.); in his noticing of the widow's mite (Mark xii. 42.); in his parables of the good Samaritan, of the ungrateful servant, and of the Pharisee and publican; of which parables no one but a man of humanity could have been the author. The *mildness* and lenity of his character is discovered in his rebuke of the forward zeal of his disciples at the Samaritan village (Luke ix. 55.); in his expostulation with Pilate (John xix. 11.); in his prayer for his enemies at the moment of his suffering (Luke xxiii. 34.), which, though it has been since very properly and frequently imitated, was then, I apprehend, new. His *prudence* is discerned, where prudence is most wanted, in his conduct on trying occasions, and in answers to artful questions. Of these, the following are examples: — His withdrawing, in various instances, from the first symptoms of tumult (Matt. xiv. 22., Luke v. 15, 16., John v. 13., vi. 15.), and with the express care, as appears from Saint Matthew (xii. 19.), of carrying on his ministry in quietness; his declining of every species of interference with the civil affairs of the country, which disposition is manifested by his behaviour in the case of the woman caught in adultery (John viii. 3—10.), and in his repulse of the application which was made to him, to interpose his decision about a disputed inheritance. (Luke xii. 14.) His judicious, yet, as it should seem, unprepared answers, will be confessed in the case of the Roman tribute (Matt. xxii. 19.); in the difficulty concerning the interfering relations of a future state, as proposed to him in the instance of a woman who had married seven brethren (Matt. xxii. 28.); and, more especially, in his reply to those who demanded from him an explanation of the authority by which he acted, which reply consisted in propounding a question to them, situated between the very difficulties into which they were insidiously endeavouring to draw *him*."[1] (Matt. xxi. 23. *et seq.*)

We conclude these remarks on the moral character of Jesus Christ, with the following eulogies on it and on him, from the pens of two celebrated unbelievers of the last century, — the avowed deist Chubb, and the eminently talented but profligate Rousseau, in whose bosom was deeply implanted a sensibility to the charms of truth which nei-

[1] Paley's Evidences, vol. i. pp. 74—76. Full and excellent illustrations of the character of Jesus Christ are given in Dr. Alexander's "Christ and Christianity" (Edinburgh 1854), and in Mr. Young's treatise, "The Christ of History." (London, 1855.)

ther the blighting frosts of scepticism nor the poisonous influences of a dissolute life could utterly extinguish.

"In Christ," says Mr. Chubb, "we have an example of a quiet and peaceable spirit, of a becoming modesty and sobriety, just, honest, upright, and sincere; and, above all, of a most gracious and benevolent temper and behaviour. One, who did no wrong, no injury to any man, in whose mouth was no guile; who went about doing good not only by his ministry, but also in curing all manner of diseases among the people. His life was a beautiful picture of human nature in its native purity and simplicity; and showed at once what excellent creatures men would be, when under the influence and power of that Gospel which he preached unto them."[1]

"I will confess to you," says Rousseau, "that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel has its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all their pomp of diction: how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scripture! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manners! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! What sublimity in his maxins! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live and so die, without weakness, and without ostentation? When Plato described his imaginary good man with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ: the resemblance is so striking that all the Christian fathers perceived it.

"What prepossession, what blindness must it be to compare (Socrates) the son of Sophroniscus to (Jesus) the son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion is there between them! Socrates, dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last; and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was any thing more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice; he had only to say, therefore, what they had done, and to reduce their examples to precept. Aristides had been just before Socrates defined justice. Leonidas had given up his life for his country before Socrates declared patriotism to be a duty. The Spartans were a sober people before Socrates recommended sobriety: before he had even defined virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men. But where could Jesus learn, among his competitors, that pure and sublime morality of which he only has given us both precept and example? The greatest wisdom was made known amongst the most bigoted fanaticism; and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues did honour to the vilest people upon earth. The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophising

[1] Chubb's True Gospel of Jesus Christ, sect. 8. pp. 55, 56.

with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for; that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonising pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes! if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God. Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty without obviating it: it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero."[1]

What a mind! to conceive ideas so beautiful and so just! The divinity of the New Testament is displayed as with a sunbeam! But what a heart to resist the force of all this evidence, to blind so fine an understanding, and be able to subjoin, as Rousseau did, *I cannot believe the Gospel!* The infidelity of this man, however, may be readily accounted for. He *would* not believe that Gospel which (as we have already seen) prohibits all impurity and injustice, both in thought and in act; *he* LOVED *darkness rather than light, because his deeds were evil.* His whole life, as he unblushingly avowed in his "Confessions," was one continued series of falsehood and profligacy.

IV. Superiority of the motives to duty presented by the Gospel.

But however excellent and complete a rule of moral duty may be in itself, it will, in the present state of mankind, hardly be sufficient to answer the end proposed, unless it be enjoined by a proper authority, and enforced by the most powerful motives. In this respect, the religious and moral precepts of the Gospel have an infinite advantage. For they are not to be regarded as the mere counsels and dictates of wise men and moralists, who can only advise and endeavour to persuade, but cannot pretend to a proper authority over mankind; nor as the injunctions of fallible human legislators, armed with civil authority, who cannot pretend to judge of the heart or of men's dispositions, and who have nothing further in view than the external order and welfare of society, and frequently make the rules of morality give way to their political interests. But they are urged upon us as the commands of God himself, the sovereign Lord of the universe, who knows our most secret thoughts, and to whom we must give an account not only of our outward actions, but also of the inward affections and dispositions of our souls.

1. Though the observance of the moral precepts of Christianity is

[1] Rousseau, Emile, livre iv. tom. ii. pp. 91, 92. Francfort. [Genève.] 1762.

not recommended in the New Testament from a consideration of the fitness of things,—that perpetual subject of dispute amongst philosophers,—or from motives of expediency, which would open a wide gate to every immorality, yet the Gospel does not reject reason as a motive to obedience. On the contrary, reason and justice are the basis of the whole morality of Christianity. Paul, speaking of dedicating ourselves to God, among other powerful motives to that duty, observes that it is a *reasonable service* which we owe to him (Rom. xii. 1.); and Peter lays it down as a fundamental principle that it is *right to obey God rather than men.* (Acts iv. 19.) It is indeed frequently remarked in the apostolic epistles, that the commandments of God are holy, just, and pure, and that they ought to be observed from gratitude and submission to him; and on the other hand, that they who transgress them are worthy of death.[1] The apostles also frequently display, in strong terms, the indignity and infamy of persons addicting themselves to particular vices or sins; and assert that modesty and decency require that our morals be decorous and well regulated. *The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.* (Rom. xiii. 12, 13.) *Whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* (Phil. iv. 8.)

2. But the evangelical writers do not confine themselves to the general motives of reason, justice, or decency; they lay it down as a special motive peculiar to Christians that they ought to live suitably to the singular favours conferred on them by the free grace and mercy of God. Since he has vouchsafed to call them out of darkness, and to impart to them the knowledge of himself, therefore they ought to lead a more holy life than those who have not yet received the same knowledge. Since God has so loved them as to give them the title of his children (1 John iii. 1.), they ought to bear his image, and *show forth his virtues.*[2] *Be ye therefore,* says Paul, *imitators of God, as dear children.* (Eph. v. 1.) Since God has purchased us anew by the blessing of redemption, we ought to be doubly consecrated to him,—first, as our Creator, and, secondly, as our Redeemer. *Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's.* (1 Cor. vi. 20.) *God, having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning every one of you from his iniquities.* (Acts iii. 26.) Such is the true end of his coming, and the price which he expects for all that he has done in our favour. *Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* (Tit. ii. 14.) *Because God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us,* therefore we ought to *be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another.* (Eph. iv. 32.) Since God *has so loved us as to send his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him,* therefore *we ought also to love one another.* (1 John vi. 9. 11.) And because *God maketh*

[1] See particularly Rom viii. 12. and i. 32.

[2] 1 Pet. ii. 9. marginal rendering.

his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust, therefore we are to *love our enemies* as well as our friends. (Matt. v. 44, 45.) Motives to obedience drawn from love are fitted to work on the best principles of our nature; and never was there such a display of the wonderful love of God to mankind, as in the method of our redemption and salvation by Jesus Christ. Where this mystery of godliness is heartily received, *with a true and lively faith,* it will have a happy influence to engage and draw us to a holy and dutiful obedience; since it is everywhere inculcated in the Gospel, that the design of sending his own Son into the world, and of all the great things which have been done for us, is to oblige us to die more and more unto sin, and to live unto righteousness.

3. Another most powerful motive to evangelical obedience is drawn from the pattern presented to us by Jesus Christ, whose sacred life and practice illustrated and exemplified his own holy laws and precepts. "Examples teach where precepts fail." And what example is there so proper and engaging as the Son of God in human flesh, the most perfect image of the invisible Deity, in whom the divine perfections are brought nearer to our view, and such of them as can be imitated by feeble man are placed within the reach of our imitation? In him we may behold the completest pattern of universal holiness and spotless purity, of the most ardent love of God, the most wonderful love to mankind, the most perfect obedience and resignation to the divine will, the most exemplary patience under the greatest sufferings, the most admirable humility, meekness, and condescension, and of every amiable virtue. And should we not be desirous to tread in his illustrious footsteps? *Learn of me,* says Christ, *for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls.* (Matt. xi. 29.) *Walk in love,* urges the apostle Paul, *as Christ also loved us, and gave himself for us.* (Eph. v. 2.) *Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification; for Christ pleased not himself.* (Rom. xv. 2, 3.) *Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things;* let him aim not at promoting his own separate interests, conveniences, or advantages, but *every man also on the things of others,* aim at promoting those of others. *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.* (Phil. ii. 3—5.) *As he that hath called you is holy,* says Peter, *so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.* (1 Pet. i. 15.)

4. A further motive is taken from the sanctions of duty which the civil relations among men have received from God. Thus, magistrates are to be obeyed, nor only *for wrath,* but for *conscience-sake,* because they are the *ordinance of God* (Rom. xiii. 2. 5.); and they must also conduct themselves towards the people, over whom they are placed, as the *ministers of God to them for good.* (Rom. xiii. 4.) Husbands and wives are to adhere inviolably to each other, because they are joined together and made one by God, who *at the beginning made them the male and the female* (Matt. xix. 4. 6.), and by whom whoremongers and adulterers will be judged. (Heb. xiii. 4.) Servants are commanded to be obedient to their masters, *in singleness of heart, fearing God, with good will doing service as unto the Lord, and not unto men;*

and masters to be just and merciful to their servants, as knowing that they *also have a master in heaven with whom is no respect of persons.* (Eph. vi. 5—7. 9.; Col. iii. 22.) And in general, *Whatsoever we do*, the Gospel enjoins us to *do it heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men* (Col. iii. 23.); and that *whether we eat or drink,* we *do all to the glory of God.* (1 Cor. x. 31.)

5. The regard which Christians owe to their holy profession furnishes another weighty motive to obedience. Immoralities of all kinds are forbidden them, because they ought to *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering; forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.* (Eph. iv. 1—3.) They are to *walk worthy of God, who has called them to his kingdom and glory* (1 Thess. ii. 12.), and *as children of the light.* (Eph. v. 8.) Their *conversation must be only as becometh the gospel of Christ.* (Phil. i. 27.) They must *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things* (Tit. ii. 10.); and take care that *the name,* or *word, of God be not blasphemed,* or evil spoken of, through them. (1 Tim. vi. 1.; Tit. ii. 5.)

6. The acceptableness of true repentance and the assurance of pardon, which the Gospel offers to all who *truly* repent, and *unfeignedly* believe and obey God's holy word and commandments, are a further most powerful motive to sinful and frail creatures, to encourage and support them in the practice of their duty. Nothing can be more satisfactory to the mind of man, nothing more agreeable to the wisdom of God, than such a declaration of the acceptableness of true repentance, and such an authentic assurance of pardon thereupon, as under the Gospel dispensation the divine mercy has found means to afford unto us, in such a manner as is at the same time abundantly consistent with the dignity of his laws and his hatred against sin.

7. For our greater encouragement, divine assistances are provided for us, to support us in the practice of our duty. This is a consideration of great moment, as every one must acknowledge who has a due sense of the weakness and corruption of human nature in its present state, and the manifold temptations to which we are here exposed. We are not left to our own unassisted strength, but have the most express promises and assurances given us in the Gospel, that God will send his Holy Spirit to enlighten and sanctify us, and to strengthen and assist us in the performance of our duty; if, from a sense of our own insufficiency, we humbly apply to him for his gracious assistance, and at the same time are diligent in the use of all proper means and endeavours on our own parts. (John xiv. 16.; 1 Cor. ii. 13., iii. 16.; Luke xi. 13.; 2 Cor. xiii. 14.; Heb. iv. 16.) For those divine influences and aids are communicated in such a way as is agreeable to the just order of our rational faculties, and not so as to render our own endeavours needless, but to assist and animate our endeavours. *It is God who worketh in us of his good pleasure;* therefore we are exhorted to *work out our salvation with fear and trembling.* (Phil. ii. 12., 13.) The effect of this divine assistance was very wonderful in the primitive times by the sudden reformation of more wicked men than all the exhortations of philosophers ever brought to repentance. And even in these days, when infidelity and profligacy abound, there are

more exemplary holy people than ever were found in the best ages of the heathen world.

8. Our relation to heaven while upon earth is likewise represented as a powerful motive to holy obedience. *Our conversation*, or citizenship, *is in heaven* (Phil. iii. 20.); and because we are only *strangers and pilgrims upon earth*, we must *abstain from fleshly lusts which war against* the peace, the purity, and dignity of *the soul.* (1 Pet. ii. 11.) We are moreover put in mind that we are only *sojourners* here, *and have no continuing city, but seek one to come* (Heb. xi. 13., xiii. 14.); that we may not seek our rest in this world, nor be too solicitous about the things of it, but may always keep our heavenly country in view, and make it our greatest concern to arrive safely there.

9. Lastly, the rewards and punishments which the Gospel proposes to obedience or disobedience are a motive perfectly agreeable to the natural hopes and fears of men, and worthy of God to make known by express revelation: for by the certain knowledge of these things is the practice of virtue established upon a sure foundation; men have sufficient to support them in their choice of virtue, and to enable them to conquer all the temptations of the world, and to despise even death itself. Paul concludes a large catalogue of flagrant sins with this just but terrible sentence: — *Of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* (Gal. v. 21.) On the contrary, the Gospel recommends the practice of Christian *humility*, by ensuring to it *the kingdom of heaven* (Matt. v. 3.); of *meekness*, because it is *in the sight of God of great price* (1 Pet. iii. 4.); of *mercifulness*, as the means of *obtaining mercy* (Matt. v. 7.); of *temperance*, as necessary in order to *run our Christian race* with success (1 Cor. ix. 24., Heb. xii. 1.); of *purity*, as a necessary preparation to the *seeing of God* (Matt. v. 8.); and of patience and perseverance in the Christian life, because *our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look, not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, because the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are* ETERNAL. (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.)[1]

Such is a faint outline of the purity and excellence of the morality of the Gospel, and of the motives by which it is enforced.[2] All the charms of the divine goodness, grace, mercy, and love, are here repre-

[1] Bp. Gibson's Pastoral Letters, Lett. 2. (in Bp. Randolph's Enchiridion, vol. i. v. pp. 174—179.)

[2] The reader, who is desirous of prosecuting the investigation of Christian morality, will find it ably delineated in Mr. Gisborne's Sermons on Christian Morality. There is also an excellent discourse, intitled "The Gospel the only Foundation of religious and moral Duty," in the first volume of Bp. Mant's Sermons, which in many topics coincides with Mr. Gisborne's first discourse. The various branches of the Christian temper are well pourtrayed by Dr. Evans in two volumes of discourses on that subject, which (though rather prolix) have been often and deservedly reprinted. See also Dr. Leifchild's Lectures on the Christian Temper (London, 1822, 8vo.), and especially Dr. Morison's Lectures on the Reciprocal Obligations of Life (London, 1822, 12mo.), and Mr. Hoare's Sermons on the Christian Character. (London, 1821, 8vo.) The Christian Morals, Essay on the Character and Writings of St. Paul, and Moral Sketches, of Mrs. Hannah More, likewise illustrate the leading topics of Christian morality with equal elegance and fidelity; and the chief part of the second volume of Mr. Warden's system of Revealed Religion contains a digest of Scripture morality, expressed in *the very words* of the sacred writings.

sented to our view, in terms the most clear, explicit, and engaging that can possibly be conceived. How the writers of the New Testament should be able to draw up a system of morals, which the world, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, cannot improve, while it perceives numberless faults in those of the philosophers of India, Greece, and Rome, and of the opposers of revelation, is a question of fact, for which the *candid* deist is concerned to account in a rational way. The Christian is able to do it with ease. The evangelists and the apostles of Jesus Christ *spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

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§ 4. *On the Objections of Unbelievers to the Doctrines and Morality of the Bible.*

Such is the unhappy obliquity of the mind of fallen man, that there never yet was proposed to it any thing, however excellent in itself, which has not been the subject of cavil, censure, or reproach. This has been the lot of the Scriptures in particular, which have been arraigned by the antagonists of divine revelation as a tissue of absurdity, fraud, and immorality. On the one hand it has been objected that some of the *doctrines* which they propound to our belief — such as the Trinity, the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, &c. — are mysterious and contrary to reason, and that where mystery begins religion ends; that the Scripture doctrine of redemption is inconsistent with the ideas at present entertained concerning the magnitude of creation; that the Scripture doctrine of a future judgment is improbable; that it establishes a system of priestcraft and spiritual tyranny over the minds and consciences of men; and that Christianity debars its professors from all inquiries concerning religious truths, and demands of them a full and implicit assent without a previous examination of the ground on which they are to build that assent. And, on the other hand, it is objected that the *morality* of the Bible is too strict, bears too hard upon mankind, and lays us under too severe restraints; that it generates a timid, passive spirit, and also entirely overlooks the generous sentiments of friendship and patriotism; that the Bible is the most immoral book extant in the world; and that it inculcates intolerance and persecution. Such are the principal objections which have, at various times, been made against the doctrines and precepts contained in the Bible: the contradictions involved in some of them cannot fail to strike the mind of the attentive reader. It might be a sufficient answer to most of them, to appeal to the facts and statements already exhibited in the course of this work, and especially to the foregoing section: but as these objections have been re-asserted and clothed in the garb of novelty, in order to impose on the unwary (though most of them have long since been refuted), they demand a distinct consideration.[1]

[1] "Pertness and ignorance may ask a question in three lines, which it will cost learning and ingenuity thirty pages to answer; and, when this is done, the same question shall be triumphantly asked again the next year, as if nothing had ever been written on the subject." (Bp. Horne's Letters on Infidelity, Works, vol. vi. p. 447.) Dr. Young (author of the "Night Thoughts"), speaking of Lord Bolingbroke's arguments against the

I. Objection 1. — *Some of the peculiar doctrines, which the Scriptures propound to our belief, are mysterious and contrary to reason; and where mystery begins, religion ends.*

Answer. — This assertion is erroneous, for nothing is so mysterious as the eternity and self-existence of God; yet, to believe that God exists is the foundation of all religion. Above our reason these attributes of Deity unquestionably are. For, who can conceive what eternity is? A duration without beginning, or succession of parts or time! Who can so much as imagine or frame any idea of a Being, neither made by itself nor by any other? Of omnipresence, of omniscience, and of immensity! How, indeed, can a *finite* capacity, like ours, comprehend an *Infinite* Being whom heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain? Vain mortal! dost thou presume to scrutinise the nature and to comprehend all the ways of the incomprehensible God? *Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know? He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. How little a portion is heard of Him! The thunder of his power who can understand? Such knowledge is too wonderful for us, we cannot attain unto it.* But though the existence of God be a mystery to us, and above our limited reason to comprehend, yet it is not contrary to reason; because the wisdom, order, and harmony, which are observable in the universe, the admirable and exquisite adaptation of every part to produce the end for which it was designed, and the providential care displayed in preserving and governing the whole, are all so many proofs of the existence of a great First Cause; and reason assures us that no effect can exist without a cause.

But our ignorance is not confined to heavenly mysteries; we cannot comprehend the common operations of nature. Every thing around us is full of mysteries. Who can tell, why, of two seeds similar in appearance, one produces a large tree, and the other a small shrub? Or, how the origin of so large a body should be contained in so narrow a space? The growth of the meanest plant, the structure of a grain of sand, is as much above our comprehension as the mysteries of religion. Bodies act on each other by different forces, which are known to us only by some of their effects. The natural philosopher observes these effects, and the mathematician calculates them. But neither of them has the slightest knowledge whatever of the causes of these effects. The natural philosopher observes an infinite number of motions in nature; he is acquainted with the general laws of motion, and also with the particular laws that regulate the motions of certain bodies: on these laws the mathematician erects theories that embrace alike the smallest particles of air or light, as well as Saturn and his moons. But neither the natural philosopher nor the mathematician has the least knowledge of the real nature of motion. We know that all bodies are composed of elements or primitive particles, and also that there are different orders of elements; and we likewise know, at least by reasoning, that from nature, from the arrangement or combination of elements, result the various compounds of which the chemical nomenclatures furnish us with a long catalogue; but what do we know concerning the *real* nature of those elements, or concerning their arrangement or combinations? — Nothing at all.[1]

If, from the general works of nature we ascend to the consideration of animated creatures, and particularly of man, we shall find mysteries prevail there also. We cannot comprehend the structure of a worm, or of a hair of our heads, nor can we

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authority of the Scriptures, remarks that they "have been long since answered. But he is not without precedent in this point. His repetition of already refuted arguments seems to be a deistical privilege, from which few of them are free. Even echoes of echoes are to be found among them, which evidently shows that they write not to discover truth *but to spread infection;* which old poison re-administered will do as well as new, and it will be struck deeper into the constitution by repeating the same dose. Besides, new writers will have new readers. The book may fall into hands untainted before, or the already infected may swallow it more greedily in a new vehicle, or they that were disgusted with it in one vehicle may relish it in another." (Young's Centaur not fabulous. Letter on Infidelity.)

[1] See numerous additional instances of mysteries in the natural world in the twelfth and thirteenth parts of M. Bonnet's Palingénésie Philosophique (Oeuvres, tom. vii. pp. 329—370. 4to. edit.); and on the subject of mysteries in religion, in general, the reader will find a valuable dissertation of Bp. Newton's, in the fourth volume of his Works. Diss. 35. pp. 220—233.

understand the combination of instinct with brute forms. We cannot tell how our bodies were formed, or in what manner they are nourished. Who can tell why the offspring resemble their parents; or why part resemble one, and part the other? Or why, as often happens, resemblances are transmitted from the first to the third generation, while the intermediate presents no traces of it? How many philosophers have theorised in vain on the mode in which the impressions of the senses are conveyed to the sensorium, and on the way in which they produce thoughts and passions! Yet the manner in which the brain operates in these instances is as much a mystery now as it was in the days of Plato and Aristotle. We cannot explain the nature of the human soul, nor in what manner it is united to the body; and yet, that such a union does exist, we are convinced by daily experience. There is nothing of which we are more intimately conscious than human liberty and free agency, or which is of greater importance to the foundations of government and morality; and yet, if we consider it metaphysically, no subject is attended with greater difficulties, as the ablest metaphysicians and philosophers in all ages have acknowledged. Wherefore, until we can comprehend ourselves, it is absurd to object to mysteries in those things which relate to the Self-existing, Eternal, and Infinite God.

Further, if from the consideration of ourselves we ascend to the higher departments of science, even to the science of demonstration itself — the mathematics — we shall find that mysteries exist there, and that there are many principles or facts in that science, as well as in the works of nature, which are above our reason, but which no person in his senses would ever venture to dispute. For instance, though we acquire the first principles of mathematics, and learn to digest the idea of a point without parts, of a line without breadth, and a surface without thickness, yet we shall find ourselves at a loss to comprehend the perpetual approximation of lines which can never meet; the doctrine of incommensurables, and of an infinity of infinities each infinitely less, not only in any infinite quantity, but than each other. Yet, all these are *matters of fact;* from which consideration we are led to infer, that it is not consistent with true philosophy to deny the reality of a thing merely because it is mysterious. Hence, before we can consistently act the sceptic concerning the incomprehensible doctrines contained in the scheme of Christianity, we must renounce the name of philosophers, and reject the system of nature; for the book of nature has its incomprehensibles, as well as the book of revelation. The former, not even the genius of a Newton could explore; the latter, not even an angel's. Both, with intense desire, desire to look into them; both are lost in depths unfathomable; both desist, believe, love, wonder, and adore!

Indeed, "if the subject be duly considered, so far from its appearing suspicious that there should be mysteries in the Christian religion, it will rather be regarded as a proof of its divine origin. If nothing more was contained in the New Testament than we knew before, or nothing more than we could easily comprehend, we might justly doubt if it came from God, and whether it was not rather a work of man's device. Were there mysteries in the *duties* of Christianity, an objection might be justly raised, but not so with respect to the *doctrines*. That there will be some things respecting the nature and government of God, which are not fully revealed; some things, which are merely hinted at, on account of their connection with other parts of divine truth; and some things, which are just mentioned but not explained, because they exceed the grasp of the human understanding, it is natural for us to expect: and what just ground is there of complaint? In a word, if, in the phenomena of nature, and in the moral government of the Deity, there are many things confessedly mysterious, is it not more than probable that this will be the case in a revelation of his will, where the subject is equally vast and far more comprehensive? *Without mysteries*, the Gospel would not be like the works of God."[1]

Further, the mysteries, which appear most contrary to reason, are closely connected with the truths and facts of which reason is convinced. For instance, the mysterious doctrine of the *Trinity*, which is so inconceivable to reason, is necessarily connected with the work of our redemption, which could only have been accomplished by the incarnation of an infinite person. The mystery of our *redemption* is necessarily connected with the necessity of satisfying divine justice. The doctrine of the *necessity of satisfaction* is necessarily connected with the doctrine of the universal *corruption* of men, who had provoked divine justice; and that *corruption* is a

[1] Bogue's Essay on the Divine Authority of the New Testament, p. 219

fact fully recognised by reason, and confirmed by experience, as well as by the confession of men in all ages.

"The mysteries of Scripture are sublime, interesting, and useful: they display the divine perfections, lay a foundation for our hope, and inculcate humility, reverence, love, and gratitude. What is incomprehensible must be mysterious, but it may be intelligible as far as revealed; and though it connect with things above our reason, it may imply nothing contrary to it. So that, in all respects, the contents of the Bible are suited to convince the serious inquirer that it is the word of God."[1] The reverse of all this is to be found in the principles of infidelity, which abound with contradictions the most absurd and incomprehensible.[2] But though some of the truths revealed in the Scriptures are mysterious, yet the tendency of the most exalted of its mysteries is *practical*. If, for example, we cannot explain the influences of the Spirit, happy will it be for us, nevertheless, if we *experience* that the *fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*. If we cannot comprehend all that we read in the sacred pages, let us, notwithstanding, submit, adore, and profit by them; recollecting that the sublimest truths, and the profoundest mysteries of religion, are as level, perhaps, to the capacity of the meanest as of the highest human intellect. By neither are they to be fully fathomed. *By both they may be easily* BELIEVED, *on the sure testimony of divine revelation*. As simple and important facts, which connect time with eternity, and heaven with earth, they belong equally to men of every order, and are directly calculated to produce those emotions of awe and reverence, of faith and hope, and reliance on the divine presence, providence, justice, and benevolence, of which the consequence must be in the highest degree MORAL.

II. OBJECTION 2.—*The Scripture doctrine of redemption is inconsistent with the ideas which are now generally received concerning the magnitude of creation.*

ANSWER.—From what is known by sensible experiment of the world in which we live, it is not unreasonable to infer, that in space there must be contained a multitude of similar worlds, so great that, with respect to our limited faculties, it may be termed infinite.[3] We may conclude, upon similar grounds, that, in each of these

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[1] Scott's Commentary on the Bible, vol. i. pref. p. xiv.

[2] See pp. 21—29. *suprà*, for a summary of the contradictory doctrines proposed by the most eminent opposers of revelation, in order to evade the reception of the Scriptures as a standard of religious belief. The absurdity of their notions is well exposed in the following compendium, executed by the author of the "Connoisseur" (one of those numerous collections of periodical essays, which reflect so much honour on British literature); who has thrown together a few of the principal tenets held by free-thinkers, under the title of

"THE UNBELIEVER'S CREED.

"I believe that there is no God, but that matter is God, and God is matter; and that it is no matter whether there is any God or no.

"I believe that the world was not made; that the world made itself; and that it had no beginning; that it will last for ever, world without end.

"I believe that man is a beast; that the soul is the body, and the body the soul; and that after death there is neither body nor soul.

"I believe that there is no religion; that natural religion is the only religion, and that all religion is unnatural.

"I believe not in Moses; I believe in the First Philosophy; I believe not the Evangelists; I believe in Chubb, Collins, Toland, Tindal, Morgan, Mandeville, Hobbes, Shaftesbury; I believe in Lord Bolingbroke," [Hume, Voltaire, Diderot, Boulanger, Volney, and Thomas Paine;] "I believe not St. Paul.

"I believe not revelation; I believe in tradition; I believe in the Talmud; I believe in the Koran; I believe not the Bible; I believe in Socrates; I believe in Confucius; I believe in Sanchoniathon; I believe in Mahomet; I believe not in Christ.

"Lastly, I believe in all unbelief."

CONNOISSEUR, No. 9. (Chalmers's edition of the British Essayists, vol. xxx. p. 48.)

[3] "Discoveries in the remote regions of space, were they a thousand times more numerous, would not in the least degree affect the work of redemption as applied to mankind in our world. Christ died to save sinners here: that is certain. And if in other worlds there are similar classes of beings,—or of beings responsible, and of various gradations of intellect, who have fallen from duty and from God,—is there any inconsistency in supposing that the same mercy and benevolence may be extended to them by the same infinite Being, to save them from merited condemnation? Of other worlds we know nothing.

worlds, there exists a race of intelligent beings. But, "let creation be as extensive as it may, and the number of worlds be multiplied to the utmost boundary to which imagination can reach, there is no proof that any of them, except men and angels, have apostatised from God. If our world be only a small province, so to speak, of God's vast empire, there is reason to hope that it is the only part of it where sin has entered, except among the fallen angels; and that the endless myriads of intelligent beings in other worlds are all the hearty friends of virtue, of religion, and of God. There is nothing inconsistent with reason in supposing that some one particular part of it should be chosen out of the rest, as a theatre on which the great Author of all things would perform his most glorious works. Every empire that has been founded in this world has had some one particular spot where those actions were performed whence its glory has arisen. The glory of the Cæsars was founded on the event of a battle fought very near an inconsiderable city; and why not this world, though less than 'twenty-five thousand miles in circumference,' be chosen as the theatre on which God would bring about events that should fill his whole empire with glory and joy? It would be as reasonable to plead the insignificance of Actium or Agincourt, as an objection to the competency of the victories there obtained (supposing them to have been on the side of righteousness), to fill the respective empires of Rome and Britain with glory, as that of our world to fill the whole empire of God with matter of joy and everlasting praise. The truth is, the comparative dimension of our world is of no account; if it be large enough for the accomplishment of events which are sufficient to occupy the minds of all intelligences, that is all that is required."[1] Admitting, then, that there is a plurality of worlds, the inhabitants of these worlds, as intelligent agents, are either sinners or not sinners. If they are *not* sinners, they do not need a Saviour or a Redemption; and if they *are* sinners, who can tell whether God has been pleased to provide salvation or redemption for any of them? The whole obedient rational creation and kingdom of God may derive immense advantage from what was exhibited in this our comparatively little globe; and in that case (as we have already remarked), it does not signify how small and mean the stage. God is glorified, and his subjects are benefited, without their directly sharing the redemption, concerning which the Scriptures give no intimation.[2]

III. OBJECTION 3.—*The doctrine of a future judgment is improbable; and the twofold sanction of rewards and punishments is of human invention.*

ANSWER.—This objection was first made in the last century by Mr. Collins (from whom later infidels have copied it), who asserted that it was "greatly improbable that God should especially interpose to acquaint the world with what mankind would do altogether as well without."[3]

"But surely this harmonises with the whole scheme that the same person by whom God carried on his gracious design of recovering mankind from a state of vice, who felt our infirmities, and was tempted as we are, should be appointed the final judge of all men, and the dispenser of future retribution. This is a reward of his sufferings and pious obedience. It must impress the wicked with awe, to think they shall be accountable to him whom they have rejected and despised. It must animate and encourage the virtuous to look forward to the appearance of him as their judge, whom they have contemplated with so much gratitude, esteem, and veneration, as their guide to immortality; and in whose service they have been patient and persevering. And that this benevolent friend of mankind should be ordained to judge the world in the name of the Universal Father shows to all that it is the will of God that the decisions should be equitable and merciful."[4] That Jesus shall be the

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The great and glorious work of redemption has been wrought in our behalf: and how the infinite scheme may affect other races of beings in other worlds, God has not informed us, and all our conjectures respecting it are vain. Reasoning from analogy, we may presume that God's moral government in other worlds will be distinguished by all those qualities of truth, of justice, of mercy, and benevolence, which mark his providence upon earth, and shine through his revealed word." McBurnie's Errors of Infidelity, p. 147.

[1] Fuller's Gospel its own Witness, p. 211. The whole of Mr. Fuller's chapter, entitled "Redemption consistent with the Magnitude of Creation," will abundantly repay the trouble of perusal for its profound, original, and satisfactory refutation of the objection now under consideration.

[2] Scott's Reply to Paine's Age of Reason, p. 74. See also Bp. Porteus's Works, vol. iii. p. 70.

[3] Deism fairly stated, p. 35. [4] Leland's View, &c. vol. iii. let. 2d, pp. 61, 62.

judge, is one circumstance relative to that life and immortality, to give the fullest assurance of which was a principal object of his mission.

Connected with the doctrine of a future judgment is that of the twofold sanction of rewards and punishments; against which Lord Bolingbroke asserts that it "was invented by men, and appears to be so by the evident marks of humanity that characterise it. The notions whereon it is founded savour more of human passions than of justice or prudence. He intimates that it implies the proceedings of God towards men in this life to be unjust, if they need rectifying in a future one."[1]

Yet he acknowledges, that "the doctrine of rewards and punishments in a future state has so great a tendency to enforce civil laws, and to restrain the vices of men, that reason, which cannot decide for it on principles of natural theology, will not decide against it on principles of good policy." He adds: "A theist who does not believe revelation can have no objection to the doctrine in general."[2]

Solomon observed, that all events in this world come alike to all. An equal retribution is not made in this life. The Gospel gives us the reason of this, namely, that the present is a state of trial to fit us for a future and better condition of being. And the doctrine of a righteous retribution in the world to come explains the whole scheme of God's proceedings towards mankind in a manner consistent with his equity, wisdom, and goodness. The inequalities that subsist in a state of trial call forth to exercise and improve those virtues which are necessary to fit us for the enjoyments of futurity; while the assurance of an equal retribution hereafter is a means of reforming the wicked, of deterring the vicious from greater enormities, and of animating the good to higher attainments. His Lordship asserts, respecting this life, "that justice requires that rewards and punishments should be measured out in various degrees and manners, according to the various circumstances of particular cases, and in a due proportion to them."[3] Facts prove, however, that this is not the case. If, therefore, there be no righteous recompense hereafter, injustice must characterise the divine government. The Christian doctrine removes the groundless aspersion, and vindicates the ways of God to man.

Lord Shaftesbury argues against the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, as "a mercenary and selfish motive to virtue, which should be practised because it is good and amiable in itself. By making this a considerable or the principal motive to duty," he says, "the Christian religion in particular is overthrown, and the greatest principle, that of love, rejected." Yet he acknowledges, that "the hope of future rewards, and the fear of future punishments, how mercenary and servile soever it may be accounted, is yet, in many instances, a great advantage, security, and support to virtue, till we are led from this servile state to the generous service of affection and love." He offers many considerations to prove that it is so. Again, he allows that, "if by the hope of reward be understood the hope and desire of virtuous enjoyments, or of the very practice of virtue in another life, it is far from being derogatory to virtue, and is rather an evidence of our loving it. Nor can this principle be justly called selfish."[4] These concessions are a complete answer to his own objection; for the Christian looks for his reward only to a higher improvement in useful knowledge and moral goodness, and to the exalted enjoyments which result from these.

"Now, though virtue should be regarded for its own sake, and God should be obeyed because it is right, and his commands are just and good; yet is it not another proper reason to choose virtue because it makes us happy? Man is formed not only with a love of what is right, and has ideas of gratitude and duty, but he has also a natural desire of life and happiness, and fear to lose these; and a desire of well-being may conspire with the rest of the discipline of his mind, and assist the growth of more liberal principles. If, in the scheme of the Divine government in this state, integrity produces more enjoyment than vice, and if it does the same in the future state, no virtue requires us to neglect such considerations. Religion does not entirely exclude self-love. It is a part of our constitution. If the universal Ruler holds forth, as the parent of intelligent beings who desires their happiness, a crown to contending virtue, it seems unjust, ungrateful, and arrogant to disdain the motive.

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[1] Works, vol. v. pp. 514—516. 4to. Fragments of Essays, No. 71.

[2] Works (Fragments of Essays, No. 42.), vol. v. pp. 322. 327.; vol. iv. pp. 59, 60.

[3] Works, vol. v. p. 493. &c. Fragments of Essays, No. 63.

[4] Characteristics, ed. 1738, 8vo. vol. ii. pp. 55. 58. 60. 63. 65. 271—273. 279.; vol. i. ed. 1737, 8vo. p. 97. Wit and Humour, part ii. sect. 3. Inquiry concerning Virtue, p. 3. sect. 3. Moralists, part ii. sect. 3.

Further, when this respect to a future recompense is the effect of a deliberate trust in the Judge of the universe, an acquiescence in his government, and a belief that he is the rewarder of such as faithfully seek him, and disposes us to well-doing, it becomes religious faith, the first duty of rational beings, and a firm bond of virtue, private, social, and divine. In this view the conduct of Moses is celebrated, Heb. xi. 24. &c., and this is the peculiar faith of a Christian, who trusts that God is faithful who has promised."[1]

Jesus himself, the most disinterested character that ever existed on earth, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame."[2] To practise virtue habitually, without any attention to, or concern about, our own happiness, is impossible, incompatible with the state of humanity, and with the general frame and constitution of the world. The Deity formed the universe to be happy. To each creature he gave but a very limited sphere of action. The general happiness of his wide creation, therefore, must be accomplished by each being happy in his own separate little department. Now, in order to secure this individual felicity, to whom could the care of each be more properly committed than to the person who is most interested in his welfare, that is, to himself? The wise and kind Creator and Ruler of all has, therefore, given every creature in trust, as it were, to himself, to advance his own highest perfection and felicity. In order to engage each to be careful about, and attend more particularly to, his own happiness, he has implanted in every one instincts, affections, and passions, that centre in the individual, and prompt to a concern for self.

If any one be deaf to the calls of private affection, and neglect an attention to his own highest perfection and happiness, he is guilty of disobedience to the Author of his frame and the former of the universe: he is unfaithful to the trust reposed in him, and occasions a chasm and deficiency of order and happiness in that part of the creation which is particularly committed to his care. This would, perhaps, appear more evident, if we were to suppose every man intrusted to *another* to promote his happiness, and this other neglected him. The effect, however, respecting the general happiness, the duty, and the transgression of it, are the same, to whomsoever the charge be committed. The Christian, therefore, by looking to future glory and felicity, as a motive to, and the reward of, piety, benevolence, and purity, is not merely promoting his own private happiness; he is fulfilling an important duty to his Maker, and adding his share to the measure of general felicity and harmony through the wide creation of God. He co-operates, in his narrow sphere, with the Deity himself, by taking care that that part of his works, which is intrusted to him, shall be as perfect and as happy as he can make it, and as conducive as possible to the general felicity. For such is the constitution of human beings, that no individual can be happy himself, unless he endeavours to promote the happiness of others; and the more he does this, the more he advances his own felicity.

Looking to future glory and happiness as the strongest motive to piety, benevolence, and all virtue, is, then, so far from "overthrowing the Christian religion, and rejecting its greatest principle, that of love," that it is harmonising those parts of it which Lord Shaftesbury thinks are discordant; and is directly and peculiarly obeying the law of love. It is taking the most *effectual means* to engage us to "love God with all our hearts, and mind, and strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves." It is using the very *same* means for both these purposes that we employ for the attainment of our own highest perfection and felicity. It is, moreover, taking the same *measure and rule* for the kind and degree of our love to our fellow-creatures, that we take for love to ourselves. For in proportion as we really desire our own future perfection and happiness, in the same proportion shall we seek the glory of God and the good of mankind. Again, it is employing the same *test* to judge of our *proficiency* in piety and benevolence, that we use to judge of our progress in self-improvement. For the increasing degrees of ardour, attention, diligence, and constancy, with which we endeavour to attain future happiness, and the personal attainments in virtue that we actually make, will be accompanied with correspondently greater zeal, industry, care, and steadiness, to advance the honour of God, and the welfare of our fellow-creatures.[3]

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[1] Alexander's Prelim. Diss. to Paraphr. on 1 Cor. xv. pp. 23, 24. Brown's Essay on the Characteristics, ess. ii. sect. 6. and 9. Toulmin's Int. Evid. Diss. vi. pp. 128—132. Watson's Answer to Gibbon, pp. 38—41.

[2] Heb. xii. 2.

[3] Simpson's Evidences, pp. 252—258.

IV. Objection 4. — *Christianity establishes a system of priestcraft and spiritual despotism over the minds and consciences of mankind.*

Answer. — Nothing is more common than for the opposers of revelation to level their artillery against the Christian ministry. Under the appellation of priests, they seem to think themselves at liberty to load them with every species of abuse. That there have been men who have engaged in the Christian ministry as other men engage in secular employments, — from motives of profit, — may perhaps be true. But that this should be represented as a *general* case, and that the ministry itself should be reproached on account of the hypocrisy of worldly men who intrude themselves into it, can only be owing to the malignity of those who make the unfounded assertion. Let the fullest subtraction be made of the characters just noticed, and we appeal to impartial observation, whether there will not remain in only this class of Christians, and at almost any period, a greater number of serious, upright, disinterested, and benevolent persons, than could be found among the whole body of deists in a succession of centuries.

The mass of mankind is busily engaged in the necessary pursuits of life, and has but little leisure to attend to mental improvement. That there should be teachers of religion, to instruct them in its principles, to enforce its numerous precepts, and to administer its consolations, has nothing in it contrary to the fitness of things and the public good. If the knowledge of arts and sciences be beneficial to a country, and the teachers of them be ranked among the most useful members of the community, those whose office and employment it is to instil into the minds of the people the principles of pure religion and morality (principles which are the best— the only—cement of civil society) certainly stand on equal or superior ground in respect to general utility. This argument will acquire additional weight, when we consider the qualifications which the New Testament requires the different orders of its ministers to possess To adduce only a few of the particulars which it enjoins respecting their private character and behaviour: — *If a man desireth the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good work. A Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity: For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? Not a novice, lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach.* (1 Tim. iii. 1—7.) *But thou, O man of God, follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness; fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.* (1 Tim. vi. 11, 12.) *Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.* (1 Tim. iv. 16.) *Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed.* (2 Cor. vi. 3.) *Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.* (2 Tim. ii. 22. 24, 25.) *Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine; neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.* (1 Tim. iv. 13, 14. 12.) *Likewise must the Deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, nor greedy of filthy lucre, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved, then let them use the office of a Deacon, being found blameless.* (1 Tim. iii. 8—10) Can any reasonable objection be alleged against the ministerial office?

But it has been said that the most extravagant claims to wealth and power have been made by men who call themselves ministers of the Gospel. Ecclesiastical history shows that this has been the fact; but with these claims Christianity is not chargeable. The ministers of the Gospel are required to *feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.* (1 Pet. v. 2.) "The question is, on what footing does the New Testament establish the support of the ministers of religion? Examine, and you

will find that it establishes it in such a way, as every reasonable man must approve. It is thought equitable that men who apply their younger years to the acquisition of languages and of philosophy, and who spend their days and strength in teaching them to others, should receive from those whom they teach such a recompence for their labour as to enable them to support themselves and their families in a decent and respectable manner. Who will complain of this as improper and unjust? The Gospel sets the maintenance of its ministers on the same footing. 'The workman is worthy of his hire. They that serve at the altar should live by the altar. When they dispense to others of their spiritual things, they should in return receive of their worldly things.' This is all that Christianity demands; and she is answerable for no other claim. Is it not reasonable that men of piety, talents, and education, who devote their lives to the spiritual instruction of their fellow-creatures, with a view to make them good and happy both in this life and that which is to come, should receive such a remuneration as to enable them to live, not in affluence and splendour, far less in luxury and extravagance, but in the respectability of a decent competence? The application of the same education and abilities to another employment would have secured wealth. Do they make exorbitant claims, when they ask, from those whom they are labouring to instruct, a moderate support?" Nor does the New Testament countenance in the ministers of religion a claim of power more than of wealth. Such claims indeed were made and established during the dark ages, and to a certain extent are still made, where the spiritual domination of the papal see still exists. But the charge of spiritual tyranny over the consciences and minds of men does not attach to the Gospel. All the motives and arguments which its ministers are authorised to employ must be drawn from the New Testament. Its discipline and ordinances are alike simple but expressive, and where the *spirit*, with which they were instituted, is duly regarded, they are admirably calculated to promote the spiritual happiness of Christians. So far, indeed, is that part of the church of Christ, established in these realms, from assuming any domination over the minds of its members, that (in opposition to the church of Rome, which makes the efficacy of the sacraments to depend on the intention of the priests) she expressly declares, that the "unworthiness of the ministers hinders not the effects of the sacraments."[1]

The real cause of the antipathy cherished by the opposers of revelation against the truly conscientious and pious ministers of the Gospel, is this. They are the men, who, having voluntarily devoted themselves to the study and service of religion (very frequently with considerable temporal sacrifices), have in every age exposed the sophistry of deists, and vindicated Christianity from their malicious aspersions. On this account the opposers of revelation will always consider them as their natural enemies. It is, however, no more a matter of surprise that they should be the objects of their invective, than that the weapons of nightly depredators should be pointed against the watchmen, whose business it is to detect them and expose their nefarious practices.

V. Objection 5.—*Christianity debars its professors from all inquiries concerning religious truths, and demands of them a full and implicit assent, without a previous examination of the ground on which they are to build that assent.*

Answer.—This objection is as old as the time of Celsus; and though its falsehood has been repeatedly shown at various times during the last *sixteen hundred years*, yet all succeeding propagators of infidelity have continued to urge it with the utmost confidence. Never, however, was objection raised upon so slight a foundation; for, so far is Christianity from rejecting the use of reason, that, on the contrary, with a candour peculiar to itself, it earnestly invites and exhorts every man, before he embraces its doctrines, fairly and impartially to examine its pretensions. *Prove all things*, says Paul: *hold fast that which is good.* (1 Thess. v. 21.) When the Apostle John warns us against believing every spirit, and bids us *try the spirits whether they are of God* (1 John iv. 1.), does he not plainly recommend the use of our understanding against a blind, enthusiastic, and implicit belief? Is not the same advice fairly implied in the commendation given to the Bereans for *searching*

[1] Article xxvi. of the Confession of the Anglican Church.

the Scriptures and inquiring into the truth of what the apostles preached? (Acts xvii. 11.) And does not Jesus Christ himself inculcate the same doctrine, when he appeals to the judgment of his adversaries, — *Why do ye not even of yourselves judge what is right?* (Luke xii. 57.) Without exercising our reason, how can we *be ready always to give a reason of the hope that is in us?* (1 Pet. iii. 15.) God has made us reasonable creatures, and he will expect from us a *reasonable service* (Rom. xii. 1.), and not the *sacrifice of fools*. (Eccl. v. 1.)[1]

The Gospel, therefore, not only invites, but demands investigation. While the founders and dispensers of false religions and absurd worship veiled them under silence and mysterious obscurity, Jesus Christ, so far from enjoining secrecy to his apostles, commands them freely to profess and openly to publish his doctrine. *What I say to you in darkness, speak ye in the light* (Matt. x. 27.); that is, the doctrine which I teach you in parables, do ye publicly explain and expound. *What ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops*; that is, what I more privately impart to you, do ye courageously publish and proclaim to all the world. Had Christianity been conscious of its own weakness, it would not thus boldly have entered the lists against the prejudices of mankind, when the great improvement and increase of all kinds of literature had excited a spirit of curiosity, which not only prompted men to inquire after, but qualified them to understand and examine truth, and detect fraud and imposture. But what fraud or imposture has been discovered in the Gospel? On the contrary, in proportion to the rigour of the scrutiny which it has undergone, the evidences of its divine authority and origin have shone, and continue to shine, with increasing lustre. The pens of infidels (calling themselves deists, but whose principles for the most part are atheistical) in great abundance have been drawn against the Scriptures. Every objection that wit or malice could suggest or derive from the modern discoveries in science has been brought forward, either in the way of open attack, or under the insidious form of professed regard for the sacred volume. But has the Bible sustained any real damage from these assaults? None whatever. Like a mighty oak it has stood unmoved, suffering nothing from the noisy wind, but the mere rustling of its leaves. The cause of truth, indeed, has been greatly promoted by these attacks; for they have given birth to such defences of Christianity as have effectually removed the doubts of *sincere* inquirers, and at once reflected honour on their authors and confusion on their enemies; while the immoral principles of deism or atheism, when brought to the test of reason, have in every instance appeared in all their native deformity.

VI. Objection 6. — *The morality of the Bible is too strict, bears too hard upon mankind, and lays us under too severe restraints.*

Answer. — Does it then rob us of any pleasures worthy of rational beings? By no means. It restrains us, indeed, but it only restrains us from things that would do us harm, and make both ourselves and our fellow-creatures miserable. It admits of every truly rational, benevolent, and humane pleasure; nay, it allows every enjoyment of which our senses are capable, that is consistent with the real good and true happiness of the whole compound nature of man. Although the Scriptures, especially the New Testament, set before us the noblest ideas of attaintments in holiness, they do not carry it to any extremes, or to a degree of strictness unsuitable to human nature. The Gospel does not prescribe an unfeeling apathy, or pretend to render us insensible to the evils or calamities incident to this present life, but directs us where to seek for consolation, and also supports us by its glorious promises. We are, indeed, taught to deny ourselves[2]; but the intention is, only

[1] The use of reason in matters of religion is ably vindicated by Bp. Newton, Works, vol. v. Diss. 34. pp. 205—220. And the propriety of the stress which the Gospel lays upon *faith* is satisfactorily stated by Bp. Maltby, in answer to the cavils of the author of Political Justice. See his Illustrations of the Truth of the Christian Religion, pp. 300—310.

[2] With respect to all the Christian precepts relating to self-government, which are objected to as harsh and severe, we may observe, that since mankind are apt to indulge their affections and passions for worldly objects too much, and since these are the great obstacles to true piety and virtue, it was wise and kind, becoming a divine teacher, in Jesus to prohibit this, and to offer the strongest motives against it. Without this, his morals

that we should endeavour to keep the inferior appetites and passions in due subjection, and that the pleasures and interests of the flesh and of the world should be made to give way to the duty we owe to God, and to the love of truth, virtue, and righteousness, whenever they happen to stand in competition. We are required not to make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof; but neither Jesus Christ nor his apostles have urged it upon us as a duty to macerate our bodies with those unnatural rigours and austerities, or to chastise them with that bloody discipline, which superstition has often enjoined under the pretence of extraordinary mortification and devotion. The Gospel offers no sanction for austerities; it allows of no partial regards, no substitution of ritual observances in the place of moral duties; nor does it permit zeal for and abundance in the discharge of one duty, to compensate for the neglect of another. On the contrary, it insists on *universal obedience*, and explicitly declares that *he who offends in one point is guilty of all.* It enjoins us to be heavenly-minded, and to set our affections on things above, yet not so as to neglect the duties and offices incumbent upon us in this present state. We are not commanded absolutely to quit the world; but, which is a much nobler attainment, to live above the world while we are in it, and to keep ourselves free from its pollutions; not wholly to renounce our present enjoyments, but to be moderate in the use of them, and so to *use this world as not to abuse it.* "All it requires is, that our liberty degenerate not into licentiousness, our amusements into dissipation, our industry into incessant toil, our carefulness into extreme anxiety and endless solicitude." In short, it enjoins every thing that can do us good, and it only prohibits every thing that can do us harm. Could a Being of infinite benevolence, wisdom, and perfection, do better, or act otherwise consistently with those perfections?[1]

VII. Objection 7. — *Some of the Moral Precepts of Jesus Christ are unreasonable and impracticable.*

1. An objection of this kind is made to the prohibition of anger, Matt. v. 22.; but the context shows that the anger here condemned is implacable.[2] "There are vices which it may be the duty of some to reprimand with sharpness. Our Lord himself was sometimes angry.[3] Anger, improper in its cause, its object, its manner, its season, and its duration, must be that which is here censured. There are different degrees of anger mentioned, and proportionable punishments annexed to each. Christ therefore asserts, agreeably to other parts of Scripture, that reviling, hatred, variance, wrath, strife, shall exclude from the kingdom of heaven[4]; and that these crimes shall be punished proportionably to their degree of guilt. But according to the tenour of the Gospel, sinful anger *unrepented of* is here supposed; for on this condition all sins, except one, are forgiven.[5] The same restriction must be understood respecting other general assertions of Jesus, as Matt. x. 33.; which cannot apply to Peter."[6]

2. The precept of Jesus to forgive injuries[7] has been asserted to be contrary to reason and nature. A few of the most eminent heathen philosophers, however, have given the same direction. It is a maxim of Confucius, "never to revenge injuries." Socrates, in his conversation with Crito[8], says to him, "the person, then, who has received an injury must not return it, as is the opinion of the vulgar." Cicero

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would have been greatly defective, and unsuitable to circumstances of humanity. If the Author of our religion has more strongly enforced the practice of self-denial than others, it is because he better knew the necessity of this to purify the heart, the conversation, and the conduct. He knew, also, and he taught, that this life is a state of trial, to prepare us for a better; and that God would finally take an account of the secrets of men's hearts, as well as of their words and actions. To regulate the thoughts and desires, therefore, was necessary, in order to fit mankind for appearing before their Judge, and to qualify them for entering those abodes into which we are told *there shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth.* (Rev. xxi. 27.) Simpson's Evidences, p. 302.

[1] The subject of the above-noticed objection is fully considered in Mr. Simpson's Internal and Presumptive Evidences of Christianity, pp. 288—302.

[2] Matt. v. 23, 24.

[3] Mark iii. 5., x. 14.

[4] 1 Cor. vi. 10.; Gal. v. 21.

[5] Matt. xii. 31, 32.

[6] Newcome's Observ. part i. ch. 1. sect. 9. Blair's Paraph. of Christ's Sermon on the Mount.

[7] Luke xvii. 3, 4.; Matt. vi. 14, 15.

[8] Sect. x.

declares[1], "that nothing is more laudable, nothing more becoming a great and excellent man, than placability and clemency." Seneca says[2], "I would pardon an injury, even without a previous benefit from the injurer, but much more after it." He also declares, that "if the world be wicked, we should yet persevere in well-doing, even amongst evil men." Phocion, when going to suffer death unjustly, charged his son with his last breath, that he should show no resentment against his persecutors.[3]

It has, further, been objected to the Christian precept of forgiveness, that it is given in a general indefinite way; whereas there are certain restrictions, without which it would be attended with fatal consequences. It must be interpreted consistently with what nature dictates to be our duty in preserving our reputation, liberty, and property; and in doing all we can in our several stations to hinder all injury and injustice from others as well as ourselves. "Undoubtedly it must. But these exceptions are so plain that they will always be supposed, and consequently need not be specified. The Christian religion makes no alteration in the natural rights of mankind, nor does it forbid necessary self-defence, or seeking legal redress of injuries, in cases where it may be expedient to restrain violence and outrage. But all the explications it gives of the duty of forgiveness are consistent with these. For the substance of what it recommends relates chiefly to the temper of the mind; that we be ready to pass by small affronts, and not forward to execute private revenge, and that we be candid in interpreting the designs and actions of those who injure us. This will engage us to forgive, while there is yet little to be forgiven; and thus will prevent the occasion of additional injuries. The Gospel proposes the example of the Supreme Being in his conduct to sinful men, as the general rule of our lenity and forbearance; and enjoins forgiveness and sincere reconciliation, in case of repentance and reformation, and receiving into full favour.[4] That we do not demand rigorous satisfaction in other cases, and that we still preserve benevolent affections towards an *unrelenting* enemy. And a man may really forgive an injury, so far as it is personal, while his relation to society may oblige him, for the general good, to prosecute the offender." [5]

3. Against the injunction to love our enemies[6] it has been argued, "if love carry with it complacence, esteem, and friendship, and these are due to all men, what distinction can we then make between the best and the worst of men?[7] But a love of esteem and complacence can never be intended by Christ, whose design was to recommend the abhorrence of all vice, while he enjoins good-will to persons of every character. In all moral writings, whether ancient or modern, love generally signifies, what it does in this precept of Christ, benevolence and good-will; which may be exercised by kind actions towards those whom we cannot esteem, and whom we are even obliged to punish. A parent exercises this towards a wicked and disobedient child; and it is this love which Jesus recommends, from the motive of resemblance to our heavenly Father." [8]

4. The commandment of Jesus "to love our neighbour as ourselves," is also objected to, as unreasonable, and impossible to be observed.[9]

"Loving, as we have just noticed, in moral writings usually signifies benevolence and good-will expressing itself in the conduct. Christ thus explains loving our neighbour as ourselves to the lawyer who asked him the meaning of it, by the beautiful parable of the compassionate Samaritan.[10] The precept we are considering may be understood, (1.) As requiring that we have the same *kind* of affection to our fellow-creature as to ourselves, disposing us to prevent his misery and to consult his happiness as well as our own. This principle will be an advocate within our own breasts for our fellow-creatures in all cases of competition and interference

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[1] De Officiis, ch. 25.

[2] De Beneficiis, ch. viii. 14. De Ira, book ii. ch. 34.

[3] See also Plutarch de Ira cohibenda. Marc. Antonin. de Vita sua, book vii. sect. 15. Butler's 8th and 9th Sermons. The Rambler, vol. iv. No. 185.

[4] Luke xvii. 3, 4.

[5] Foster against Tindal, pp. 257—261. 1st edit. Christianity as old as the Creation, p. 340.

[6] Matt. v. 43—46.

[7] Christianity, &c. p. 342.

[8] Foster against Tindal, pp. 261—264. Balguy's Sermons, vol. i. serm. 13.

[9] Matt. xix. 19.; Luke x. 27., &c.; Levit. xix. 17, 18. 34.; Deut. x. 17—19.

[10] Luke x. 25—37.

between them and us, and hinder men from being too partial to themselves. This inward temper is the only effectual security for our performing the several offices of kindness which we owe to our fellow-creatures. (2.) It may require that we love our neighbour in some certain *proportion* as we love ourselves. A man's character cannot be determined by the love he bears to his neighbour, considered absolutely, but principally by the proportion which this bears to self-love; for when the one over-balances the other, and influences the conduct, that denominates the character either selfish or benevolent; and a comparison is made in this precept between self-love and the love of our neighbour. The latter, then, must bear some proportion to the former, and virtue consists in the due proportion. We have no measure by which to judge of the degree of affections and principles of action, considered in themselves. This must be determined by the actions they produce. A competent provision for self has a reasonable bound. When this is complied with, the more care, and thought, and property, persons employ in doing good to their fellow-creatures, the nearer they come to the law of perfection, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' (3.) The words may be understood of an *equality* of affection. Yet still a person would, in fact, and ought to be, much more taken up and employed about himself and his own concerns, than about others and their interests. For besides the one common affection towards himself and his neighbour, he would have several other particular affections, passions, appetites, which he could not possibly feel in common both for himself and others. From hence it follows, that though there were an equality of affection to both, yet regard to ourselves would be more prevalent than attention to others and their concerns. And it ought to be so, supposing still the equality of affection commanded; because each person is in a peculiar manner intrusted with himself, and therefore care of his own interests and conduct particularly belongs to each. Besides, moral obligation can extend no further than to natural possibility. Now we have a perception of our own interests, like consciousness of our own existence, which we always carry about with us, and which, in its continuation, kind, and degree, seems impossible to be felt in respect to the interests of others. Therefore, were we to love our neighbour in the same degree (so far as this is possible) as we love ourselves, yet the care of ourselves would not be neglected. The temper and conduct to which due love of our neighbours would lead us is described in 1 Cor. xiii. A really good man had rather be deceived than be suspicious; had rather forego his known right than run the hazard of doing even a hard thing. The influence of this temper extends to every different relation and circumstance of life, so as to render a man better. Reasonable good-will, and right behaviour, towards our fellow-creatures, are in a manner the same; only that the former expresses the principle as it is in the mind; the latter, the principle as it were become external."[1]

The precepts, to do to others as we would have them do to us[2], and to love our neighbour as ourselves, are not merely intelligible and comprehensive rules, but they also furnish the means of determining the particular cases which are included under them. In any instance of his conduct to another, if a man sincerely asks himself, what he could reasonably desire that person should do to him, or how he himself would wish to be treated in the same circumstances, his own mind will present a proper rule of action in that instance. These precepts are likewise useful *means* of moral improvement, and afford a good *test* of a person's progress in benevolence. For as it requires practice and moral discernment to apply them properly to particular cases, the more aptly and expeditiously any one does this, the greater must be his proficiency in disinterested kindness.

The excellence and utility of these moral maxims have engaged the sages of the East to adopt them. In the fables, or amicable instructions, of Veshnoo-Sarma, is the following sentiment: "He who regards another's wife as his mother; another's goods as clods of earth; *and all mankind as himself*, is a philosopher."[3] And Confucius has this precept, "Use others as you desire to be used yourself."[4]

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[1] Bp. Butler's Sermons, No. 12. (Works, vol. i. pp. 204—217.) Hartley on Man, part ii. ch. 2. prop. 38.

[2] Matt. vii. 12.

[3] Wilkins's translation, p. 287.

[4] Chinese Book of Maxims, 3rd Classical Book, article 12. Du Halde's History of China, vol. iii. p. 316. edition 1741.

5. The command of God, that we believe in Jesus Christ[1], and the sanctions by which it is enforced, "*he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned*,"[2] have been objected against by Mr. Tindal. He says, "Faith, considered in itself, can neither be a virtue, or a vice; because men can no otherwise believe than as things appear to them."[3] "Yet that they appear in such a particular manner to the understanding may be owing entirely to themselves. Now let it be particularly observed, that it is nowhere said or insinuated in the New Testament, that those shall be condemned for unbelief who never heard the Gospel, or who never had it laid before them with proper evidence. On the contrary, the whole spirit of Christianity teaches, that where there is no law there is no transgression, and that sin is not imputed where there is no law.[4] It declares that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.[5] All threatenings must be understood of unbelievers who had sufficient light and evidence offered to them, and who, through inattention, neglect, wilful prejudice, or from corrupt passions and views, have rejected it, as Christ says, John iii. 19., xv. 22. Nothing can be more reasonable than that those, who wilfully refuse the light that would direct and comfort them, should suffer the natural consequences of such refusal. This is agreeable to the usual government of God in the natural and moral world."[6] "The sanctions with which our Lord enforces the precept of faith in him, though generally applied to a future judgment, do not appear to have any relation to it; but only to the admission of the Christian converts into the Christian church, after Christ's ascension, upon the same terms as he admitted them himself. Jesus here, upon leaving the world, gives his apostles the same power which he himself had exercised, and orders them to use it in the same manner. 'He that believeth not[7], shall be *condemned*,' or accountable for his sins. This answers to the denunciation which Christ had often made against those who should not receive him; 'that they should die in their sins.' Thus John iii. 18, 19. What this damnation or condemnation was, we see, John viii. 24. 'ye shall die in your sins.' The same appears to be the sense of John xx. 23.; Matt. xvi. 19. All these texts declare, that upon the first receiving the Christian religion, Christ, and his apostles in his name, *forgave* those that believed and were baptized; and what was then done here would be confirmed in heaven. But they have no relation to their condemnation or acquittal at the day of judgment; at which time every man will be judged according to his works, and according to what he has received."[8]

VIII. Objection 8. — *Christianity produces a timid passive spirit, and also entirely overlooks the generous sentiments of friendship and patriotism.*

Answer. — 1. It is a peculiar feature of Christian morality, that it entirely omits precepts founded on false principles, those which recommend fictitious virtues; which, however admired and celebrated, are productive of no salutary effects, and, in fact, are no virtues at all. Valour, for instance, is for the most part constitutional, and so far is it from producing any salutary effects, by introducing peace, order, or happiness into society, that it is the usual perpetrator of all the violences, which, from retaliated injuries, distract the world with bloodshed and devastation. It is the chief instrument which ambition employs in her unjust pursuits of wealth and power, and is therefore so much extolled by her votaries. It was, indeed, con-

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[1] 1 John iii. 23.; John vi. 29. [2] Mark xvi. 16.

[3] Christianity as old as the Creation, p. 51. In "Christianity not founded on Argument," is the same objection, pp. 8. 17, 18., though the author reasons in the manner here stated in answer to it in p. 64. of his own book.

[4] Romans iv. 15., v. 13. [5] 1 Cor. v. 12.; Acts x. 34, 35.

[6] Leechman's Sermons, vol. ii. sermon 23. p. 240. &c.

[7] Rather, "He that disbelieveth," *ὁ ἀπιστήσας*. It is not the *ὁ μὴ πιστεύων*, *he who believeth not*, because the Gospel has not been offered to him, that is intended; but he, who having heard it, wilfully *dis*believes it.

[8] Ben Mordecai's Letters, the 7th, p. 847. Campbell in loc. Foster's Sermons. vol. iii. sermon 9. on the Morality of Faith; also, 1 Cor. xv. 17. Simpson's Evidences. pp. 261—277.

genial with the religion of pagans, whose gods were for the most part deceased heroes, supposed to be exalted to heaven as a reward for the rapines, murders, adulteries, and other mischiefs, which they had perpetrated upon earth; and therefore, with them, this was the first of virtues, and had even engrossed the denomination of *virtue* to itself. But Christians are so far from being allowed to *inflict* evil, that they are forbidden even to *resist* it, — that is, to repel one outrage by another[1]; they are so far from being encouraged to *revenge* injuries, that one of their first duties is to *forgive* them; so far from being incited to *destroy* their enemies, that they are commanded to *love them* and serve them to the utmost of their power, and to overcome evil with good. With reference to this pacific disposition of Christianity, a celebrated sceptic[2] of the eighteenth century objected, that a state composed of *real* Christians could not subsist. We may, however, ask, in the words of an acute observer of human nature, whom no one will charge with credulity or superstition, — "Why not? Citizens of this profession would have a clear knowledge of their several duties, and a great zeal to fulfil them; they would have a just notion of *the right of natural defence;* and the more they thought they owed to religion, the more sensible they would be of what they owed to their country. The principles of Christianity, deeply engraven upon the heart, would be infinitely more powerful than the false honour of monarchies, the human virtues of republics, and the servile fear of despotic states."[3] The same author also mentions it as "an admirable thing, that the Christian religion, which seems to have for its object only the felicity of another life, does also constitute our happiness in this."[4]

But though Christianity exhibits no commendation of fictitious virtues, it is so far from generating a timid spirit, that, on the contrary, it forms men of a singular cast, — some would say, of a singular courage. "It teaches them to be afraid of offending God and doing injury to man; but it labours to render them superior to every other fear. They must carry on a constant war against evil; but 'the weapons of their warfare are not carnal.' Was it a timid character which Christ designed to form when he sent his disciples through all the world to propagate his religion? They were to penetrate into every country; they were to address men of every nation, and tongue, and language; they were to expose themselves to hunger and nakedness, to ridicule and insult, to persecution and death. None of these things must deter them; they must be daily speaking the word of life, however it may be received, and to whatever dangers it may expose them. They must hazard all for the propagation of truth and righteousness in the world. The lives of Christians have, in numberless instances, displayed the efficacy of these divine principles. Can such instances of active exertion, of persevering labour, of patient suffering, be adduced, as those which have been displayed by the disciples of Jesus Christ? That they make not the noise of those that sack cities, and desolate countries, and spread far and wide the work of destruction, is certainly not to their dispraise. Their method of reforming the world, and meliorating the condition of man, is not by *brute force*, but by implanting in the soul the sentiments of knowledge and of goodness; the fruit will be certain felicity. Christianity does all her work, and effects all her purposes, by means of *principles:* she employs and she permits no other way besides."[5]

Answer. — 2. With regard to that part of the objection which is founded on the silence of the Gospel concerning friendship (by which term is usually understood a mutual attachment subsisting between two persons, and founded on a similarity of disposition, will, and manners),—whence it is insinuated that Christianity affords

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[1] Matt. v. 39. It is, however, to be observed that this precept applies *principally* to those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Let such leave the judgment of their cause to Him, for whose sake they suffer. It is also to be recollected that this precept of Jesus Christ was designed chiefly to correct the mistaken notion of the Jews in his time, who thought that *every* outrage should be resented to the utmost, and thus the spirit of hatred and strife was fostered. See some excellent observations on this passage of Scripture, in Bp. Porteus's Lectures on the Gospel of Matthew, vol. i. pp. 154, 155.

[2] M. Bayle.

[3] Montesquieu, Esprit des Loix, livre xxiv. ch. 6. (Œuvres, tom. ii. p. 254. edit. Paris, 1796.) See also ch. iii. pp. 250, 251.

[4] Ibid. p. 252.

[5] Bogue's Essay on the Divine Authority of the New Testament, p. 220.

no countenance to private friendship,—various satisfactory reasons may be assigned why Jesus Christ did not enact any laws, nor give, like some of the ancient philosophers, professed disquisitions concerning friendship. In the first place, a *pure* and *sincere* friendship must, from its very nature, be entirely a matter of choice; and from its delicacy, it is reluctant to the very appearance of compulsion. Besides, it depends upon similarity of disposition, upon coincidence of sentiment and affection, and, in short, upon such a variety of circumstances which are not within our control or choice, that perhaps the greater part of mankind pass through life without having enjoyed friendship *in all that perfection* of which we may suppose it capable. Nor if this could be accomplished, would it be favourable to the general virtue and happiness. Such strong partial attachments usually lead persons to prefer their friends to the public. Friendships of this kind have subsisted among savages and robbers. Theseus and Pirithöus, whom modern sceptics have produced as applauded instances, were equally remarkable for friendship, rapes, and plunder. Such attachments are hurtful to society and to mankind; they weaken public virtue and general charity. As however mankind are prone to form them, it would have been a defect in the Christian religion, had it enjoined or even recommended friendship in this extreme. Accordingly the Gospel sets such attachments very low, as consistent with the lowest selfishness. *If ye do good to them who do good to you, what thank have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?* (Matt. v. 46.)

On all these accounts, therefore, it was unnecessary for Christ to enact laws on the subject of friendship, which, indeed, could not possibly be the object of a divine command; for such laws must have been entirely beyond the reach of ordinary practice, and on a subject in its nature totally incompatible with restraint. The propriety, therefore, of such an omission will be evident to every one who *candidly* considers the nature of the temper and disposition enjoined by the Gospel. If *the end of its commandment be* (as we know is the case) *charity out of a pure heart and faith unfeigned*,—and charity of the most enlarged and diffusive kind,—Christianity would long before this time have been charged with inconsistency by its adversaries, if any laws had been made either directly or by consequence confining its exercise. Indeed, it would not have been prudent to have expressed in the Gospel any particular approbation of friendship. "It may have inflamed that propensity to it which nature had already made sufficiently strong, and which the injudicious encomiums of heathen moralists had raised to a romantic and dangerous height. Our divine lawgiver showed his wisdom, equally in what he enjoined, and what he left unnoticed. He knew exactly, — what no pagan philosopher ever knew, — where to be silent, and where to speak. It was not his intention, it was indeed far below his dignity, to say fine things upon popular subjects; pleasing perhaps to a few, but utterly useless to the bulk of mankind. *His* object was of a much more important and extensive nature; to inculcate the plain, humble, practical duties of piety and morality; the duties that were of universal concern and indispensable obligation, such as were essentially necessary to our well-being in this life, and our everlasting happiness in the next. Now, the warmest admirers of friendship cannot pretend to raise it into a *duty*, much less a duty of this high rank. It is a delightful, it is an amiable, it is often a laudable attachment; but it is not a necessary requisite, either to the present welfare or the future salvation of mankind in general, and, consequently, is not of sufficient importance to deserve a distinct place in the Christian system."[1] But though the Gospel makes no specific provision for friendship, (and, as we have seen, for good reasons,) yet it does not prohibit that connection; on the contrary, it is expressly sanctioned by the example of Christ, whose chosen friend and companion was the beloved apostle John, and whose friendship for Martha, Mary, Lazarus, and others, the evangelical historians have delineated in the most amiable manner. "If he had his beloved companion and friend, we cannot surely be acting contrary to his sentiments, if we also have ours;" but let us take heed what choice we make. *Ye are my friends*, says Christ, IF YE DO WHATSOEVER I COMMAND YOU. (John xv. 14.) On the contrary, *the friendship of the world is enmity with God: whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God.* (James iv. 4.)

ANSWER.—3. Equally satisfactory reasons may be assigned for the silence of the

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[1] Bp. Porteus's Sermons, vol. i. 438.

Gospel, with respect to *patriotism;* which (it has been asserted) Jesus Christ has nowhere taught or enforced by precept or by example.

What is patriotism? — The love of our country. But what love? The bigoted love cherished by the Jews, in the time of Jesus Christ, which impelled them to abominate every other nation as accursed, and to refuse to render them even the slightest good office? — The proud love displayed by the Greeks, which despised the rest of mankind as ignorant barbarians? — The ambitious love of conquest, that predominated among the Romans, and stimulated them to enslave the world? — That selfish love, so much vaunted of in modern times, which leads men to seek the aggrandisement of their country, regardless of the morality of the means by which that aggrandisement is to be accomplished; which fosters party-spirit, engenders strife and every evil passion, encourages slavery, and excites one part of the human race to murder and extirpate the other? — No. Of this spirit Christianity knows nothing. "Patriotism is that Christian love which, *while it respects as sacred the rights and the welfare of* EVERY *land, of* EVERY *foreign individual,* teaches us to manifest within the limits of justice special affection to our own country, in proportion to the special ties by which we are united with the region that gives us birth. If our Lord, then, inculcated by his own lips, or by the pen of his apostles, the universal obligation of justice and love; if, in regulating the exercise of justice and love, he pronounces that wrong and fraud are the more sinful when directed against the *Brethren*[1]; that while we *do good unto all men,* we are bound *specially to do good unto them who are of the household of faith*[2]; that affection of more than ordinary strength is mutually to be evinced between husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters: He has decided that every additional tie, by which man is connected with man, is an obligation to additional love: He has established *the duty of patriotism,* by establishing the very principle from which the duty necessarily flows. If He bore, with unwearied patience, hatred and contempt, and persecution unto death, from his Jewish adversaries; if He mourned with the most tender sympathy over the impending destruction of Jerusalem[3]; if He repeated, at a second risk of his life, his efforts for the conversion of his countrymen the Nazarenes[4], — by his own conduct he sanctioned patriotism, by his conduct he exemplified it, by his own conduct he commanded it."[5] And the example, which Jesus Christ thus gave in his own person, we find, was followed by his apostles, who both before and after his crucifixion, first and principally laboured to propagate the Gospel among their own people, the Jews. Even Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, when he entered into those places where the Jews resided, first directed his labours to them; and such was his patriotism, that he could not only say, *My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved* (Rom. x. 1.); but, with a love as ardent as it was pure, he also declared, *I could wish myself accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites.* (Rom. ix. 3, 4)

Nor is the Old Testament history destitute of instances of the noblest and most disinterested patriotism. Of all the examples recorded either in ancient or modern history, whether sacred or profane, it will be difficult to find one surpassing that of the illustrious Hebrew legislator, Moses. His attachment to the people over whom he presided presents his character in a most amiable point of view. When the displeasure of the Almighty was manifested against them, after their idolatrous conduct at Mount Sinai, how forcibly did he intercede in their favour! *Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their sin; . . . . and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book, which thou hast written.* (Exod. xxxii. 32.) On another occasion, when it is related that the Almighty threatened the destruction of the Israelites, and even offered to make of him *a greater nation and mightier than they,* how nobly did he sacrifice every view, which ambition might have suggested to him, to the love of God and to the love of his people! After powerfully interceding from various considerations, that they might again be forgiven, he obtained this answer to his supplications, *I have pardoned, according to thy word.* (Numb. xiv. 20.) It were not difficult to adduce numerous

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[1] 1 Cor. vi. 8. [2] Gal. vi. 10. See also Rom. ix. 1—3., x. 1., xi. 14.

[3] Matt. xxiii. 37.; Luke xiii 34., xix. 41, 42.

[4] Luke iv. 16—30.; Matt. xiii. 54.; Mark vi. 1—6.

[5] Gisborne's Sermons on Christian Morality, p. 260. The whole of his fourteenth and fifteenth discourses is particularly worthy of perusal.

additional instances from the Old Testament, especially from the book of Psalms. (See a beautiful and affecting passage breathing the purest patriotism in Psal. cxxxvii. 4, 5.) So far, indeed, was an attachment to the country, in which Providence has placed us, inculcated among the Jews, that they were required, when taken captive to another land, to *seek the peace of the city* whither they were carried away captives, and to *pray unto the Lord for it: for*, adds the prophet Jeremiah, *in the peace thereof ye shall have peace.* (Jer. xxix. 7.) [1]

True patriotism is never at variance with true morality, and the moral character is not complete without it. A strict performance of our duty to the community of which we form a part, and to the government under which we live, involves no infringement of our private duties, or of our duty to our fellow-men; each is sufficiently distinct, and each ought to be inviolably observed. He is seldom found to be a good parent, brother, or friend, who neglects his duty to the public and to the government; and he cannot be a good patriot who neglects any civil, social, or relative duty. "It is not natural to a Christian to enter into the antipathies, or to embroil himself in the contentions of a nation, however he may be occasionally drawn into them. His soul is much more in its element, when breathing after the present and future happiness of a world. In undertakings, both public and private, which tend to alleviate the miseries and enlarge the comforts of the human life, Christians have ever been foremost; and when they have conceived themselves lawfully called, even into the field of battle, they have not been wanting in *true* bravery. But the heroism, to which they principally aspire, is of another kind; it is that of subduing their own spirit, doing good against evil, seeking the present and eternal good of those who hate them, and laying down their lives, if required, for the name of the Lord Jesus."

IX. Objection 9. — *The Bible is the most immoral book in the world.*

Answer. — This assertion was first promulgated by the author of the Age of Reason, and it has been repeated in a thousand different forms in those publications which have since been issued from the press by the opposers of revelation. In refutation of this assertion, it is sufficient to refer to the view already exhibited in the preceding pages of the morality of the Old and New Testaments.[2] It is readily admitted that the Old Testament does relate immoral actions; and every impartial history of mankind must do the same. The question is, whether they be so related as to leave a favourable impression upon the mind of a serious reader. If so, and if the Bible be the immoral book which it is asserted to be, how is it that the reading of it should have reclaimed millions from immorality? — a fact that is too notorious to be denied by impartial observers. Every man residing in a Christian country will acknowledge (unless he have an end to answer in saying otherwise) that those people who read the Bible, believe its doctrines, and endeavour to form their lives by its precepts, are the most sober, upright, and useful members of the community; and that those, on the other hand, who discredit the Bible, and renounce it as the rule of their lives, are, generally speaking, addicted to the grossest vices; such as profane swearing, lying, drunkenness, and lewdness. It is surely very singular, that men by regarding an immoral book should learn to practise morality; and that others, by disregarding it, should learn the contrary. How is it, indeed, that the principles and reasonings of infidels, though frequently accompanied with great natural and acquired abilities, are seldom known to make any impression on sober people? Is it not because the men and their communications are known? How is it that so much is made of the falls of Noah, Lot, David, Jonah, Peter, and others? The same things in heathen philosophers or modern unbelievers would be passed over without notice. All the declamations of our adversaries on these subjects plainly prove that such instances with us are more *singular* than with them. With us they are occasional, and afford matter for deep repentance; with them they are habitual, and furnish employment in the work of palliation. The spots on the garments of a child attract attention; but the filthy condition of the animal that wallows in the mire is disregarded, as being a thing of course. The morality, such as it

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[1] Tuke on the Duties of Religion and Morality, as inculcated in the Holy Scriptures pp. 195—198.

[2] See pp. 345—349. and 362—371. *suprà.*

is, which is found among deists, amounts to nothing more than a little exterior decorum. *They explicitly deny that there is anything criminal in a wicked intention.*[1] The great body of these writers pretend to no higher motives than a regard to their safety, interest, or reputation. Actions proceeding from these principles must not only be destitute of virtue, but wretchedly defective as to their influence on the well-being of society. If the heart be inclined towards God, a sober, righteous, and godly life becomes a matter of choice; but that which is performed, not for its own sake, but from fear, interest, or ambition, will extend no farther than the eye of man can follow it. In domestic life it will be but little regarded; and in retirement not at all. Such, in fact, is the character of infidels. "Will you dare to assert," says Linguet, a French writer, in an address to Voltaire, "that it is in philosophic families we are to look for models of filial respect, conjugal love, sincerity in friendship, or fidelity among domestics? Were you disposed to do so, would not your own conscience, your own experience, suppress the falsehood, even before your lips could utter it?"[2]

Much, however, of the immoral statements which are asserted to exist in the Bible is founded on a *wilful* inattention to the wide difference that subsists between ancient and modern manners. The characteristic distinction of modern manners is, the free intercourse of the two sexes in the daily commerce of life and conversation. Hence the peculiar system of modern manners;—hence that system of decorum, delicacy, and modesty (founded on the morality of Scripture) which belong entirely to this relation of the sexes, and to the state of society in which it exists. But in the ancient world there was nothing of this intercourse. Women were either wholly shut up, as among the Asiatics of all ages; or were slaves, handmaids, and inferiors, as among the Jews, and in the patriarchal ages; or, by the effect of custom (as despotic as positive law), they could not converse or go abroad but with their own immediate family, as among the Greeks and Romans. Hence what we call and feel to be delicacy and modesty, and the whole system resulting from them, had no existence among such nations. Men wrote only to men; laws were given only to men; history was read only by men. Every thing was called by the name originally affixed to it; and as such names had no adjunctive signification, arising only from the intercourse of the sexes, they excited ideas of indelicacy or immodesty no more than similar names excite such ideas among the naked Indians. And hence, as a profound critic[3] long ago remarked, there is the same difference between the free language of Scripture and the free language of the Greek and Roman writers, as there is between the nakedness of a courtesan and the nakedness of an Indian.

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.—Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you. The grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.[4]

Such, reader, is an epitome of Christian morality. Judge of the falsehood of the assertion made by its enemies, that the Bible is the most immoral book in the world.[5] "The Gospel," says the profound and penetrating Locke, whom no one will accuse of enthusiasm, "*contains so perfect a body of ethics*, that reason may be excused from the inquiry, since she finds men's duty clearer and easier in revelation than in herself."[6]

X. Objection 10.—*The Bible inculcates a spirit of intolerance and persecution.*

Answer.—The ancient adversaries of the Gospel, as well as their more modern copyists, have represented the religion of Jesus Christ as of an unsocial, unsteady,

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[1] Volney's Law of Nature, p. 18. See also pp. 28, 29. *suprà.*

[2] Linguet was an admirer of Voltaire; but disapproved of his opposition to Christianity. See his Review of that author's works, p. 264. Fuller's Gospel its own Witness, pp. 72. 74, 75.

[3] Dr. Bentley.

[4] Matt. vii. 12., v. 44.; Tit. ii. 11, 12.

[5] Concerning the Contradictions to morality, which are falsely alleged to exist in the Scriptures, see the Appendix to this Volume, No IX., *infrà.*

[6] Locke's Letter to Mr. Molyneux, A. D. 1696. Works, vol. iv. p. 327. 4to. edit.

surly, and solitary complexion, tending to destroy every other but itself. And it must be owned that it does tend to destroy every other, in the same manner as truth in every subject tends to destroy falsehood, that is, by *rational conviction.* The same objection might be urged against the Newtonian philosophy which destroyed the Cartesian fables, or against the Copernican system, because the visions of Ptolemy and Tycho-Brahe vanished before it. The sun extinguishes every inferior lustre. And the glimmering lamps of human knowledge, lighted up by the philosophers, served, indeed, to conduct them as a light shining in a dark place; but this must naturally be sunk in a superior lustre, when the Sun of righteousness should arise. The Gospel, therefore, is so unsociable as to discredit error, with which it is as incompatible as light with darkness. But it is evident to any one who will calmly examine the Bible, that its pages do not inculcate any such thing as a spirit of intolerance and persecution.[1]

It is well known that the Jews, who were distinguished for their spiritual pride and bigotry, and who regarded other nations with an almost absolute intolerance, were never more strongly marked by these characteristics than at the time when Jesus Christ appeared. Even the apostles were not exempted from a share of this character. *Master,* said John, *we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not; for he that is not against us is for us.* Again, John and James, moved with indignation against the inhabitants of a Samaritan village, because they declined to receive their Master, said unto him, *Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, as Elias did? But he turned and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.* So intolerant was the spirit even of the beloved disciple, and so benevolent was that of Christ. In this nation, then, and at this period, was Christ born and educated. But, instead of imbibing, countenancing, or warranting intolerance and bigotry, he taught, *in all instances,* their odiousness and guilt; and enjoined, with respect to every subject and person, the most absolute moderation, liberality, and candour; — not, indeed, the fashionable liberality of licentious men in modern times, a professed indifference to truth and holiness; — but a benevolent and catholic spirit towards every man, and a candid and just one towards every argument and opinion. Distinctions of nations, sects, or party, as such, were to him nothing; distinctions of truth and falsehood, right and wrong, were to him every thing. According to this scheme, he framed his instructions and his life; and the same catholic spirit and freedom from intolerance characterise the writings of his apostles.

The moderation of pagan governments, and their liberality in granting unlimited indulgence to the different modes of worship that obtained among the heathens, have been magnified by the opposers of Christianity, and eulogised as if universal liberty had been allowed, without any restraint upon the open or secret practices of men in the exercise of religion. But this representation is quite contrary to the truth. The Roman government, in its suppression of the Bacchanalian mysteries (which were infamous for their voluptuousness and debaucheries), *conducted itself solely by the maxims of civil policy,* without any regard whatever to the religious pretexts of the worshippers.[2] And nothing can be more injurious to the religion of Christ than the malicious suggestion which one infidel repeats after another, that persecution for religion was indebted for its first rise to the Christian system; whereas the very *reverse* is the real truth, as might be proved by many facts recorded in history. To instance only a few: — the Athenians allowed no alteration whatever in the religion of their ancestors[3]; and, therefore, Socrates suffered death, as a *setter forth of strange gods*[4], in the same city of Athens in which, four hundred

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[1] Respecting the charges of cruelty brought against the Israelites for putting to death the Canaanites and other nations, see the Appendix to this volume, No. IX. *infrà.*

[2] See the very interesting account of the proceedings of the Roman government in this affair, in Livy's History, book xxxix. chapters 8—19. The celebrated decree against the Bacchanalian meetings is still extant on a plate of copper, which was dug up about the middle of the seventh century, and is now preserved in the imperial library at Vienna.

[3] Isocrat. in Areopag. p. 374. edit. Basil. 1582.

[4] Diog. Laërt. de Vitis Philosophorum, lib. ii. c. 5. § 19. tom. i. p. 174. edit. Longolii. Ælian. Var. Hist. lib. ii. c. 13. Xenophon. Memorabilia Socratis, lib. i. c. 1.

and fifty years afterwards, Paul of Tarsus was charged with the same crime, *by certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection.* (Acts xvii. 18.) But were a similar severity to be employed by any Christian state, it would be imputed, not merely to the policy of governors, but to the temper of priests. The odious bigotry of Antiochus Epiphanes (1 Macc. i. 41.) will not easily escape the recollection of any, but of those who will impute no fault nor arraign any crime, except it be found to involve in its consequences the friends of revealed religion. Had the law of the twelve tables at Rome, which prohibited the worship of new or foreign gods[1], been considered as the edict of a Christian prince, the loudest complaints would have been uttered against the spirit of bigotry by which it was dictated. And if the demolition of the temple of Serapis and Isis had been effected by the order of an ecclesiastical synod, instead of a heathen senate[2], it would doubtless have been styled an atrocious outrage upon the inalienable rights of private judgment, instead of being represented as proceeding from the use of "a common privilege," and ascribed to the "cold and feeble efforts of policy."[3] Tiberius prohibited the Egyptian and Jewish worship, banished the Jews from Rome, and restrained the worship of the Druids in Gaul[4]; while Claudius employed penal laws to abolish their religion.[5] Domitian and Vespasian banished the philosophers from Rome, and the former confined some of them in the islands, and whipped or put others to death.[6] Nothing, therefore, can be more unfounded than the assertion, that intolerance and persecution owe their introduction to Christianity: since the violent means, which for *three hundred years after its origin* were adopted for the purpose of crushing this very religion, — at the time when its professors are universally acknowledged to have been both inoffensive[7] and unambitious, — are too well known to be controverted. It is the duty of every good government to provide for the security of society and of moral order. This, we have seen, was an important object of attention, even with pagan governments. The writings of the opposers of revelation, in our own day especially, are subversive of both. Under the mask of free inquiry (which the Gospel demands and invites, and of which it has stood the test for more than eighteen centuries, as it will to the end of time), they have compiled, *without acknowledgment*, from the oft-refuted productions of former infidels, and have circulated from the press, tracts of the most destructive tendency to the public morals and safety. And when they suffer the sentence of the *deliberately violated* laws of their country, they call it persecution. "But persecution in every degree, and whatever abridges any man in his civil rights on account of his religious tenets, — *provided he be a peaceable member of the community, and can give a proper ground of confidence, that his principles require or allow him to continue so,* — is wholly contrary to the spirit of the Gospel;" as well as all acrimony, reviling, contempt, or misrepresentation, in religious controversy.[8]

It is readily admitted that men, *calling themselves Christians*, have persecuted others with unrelenting cruelty, and have shed rivers of innocent blood; but the Gospel does not authorise such a conduct, and therefore is not chargeable with it. Such persecutions prove that those who inflicted them were not animated by the spirit of *real* Christianity. Facts and experience, however, have proved that it is

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[1] Separatim nemo habessit Deos; neve novos, sive advenas, nisi publicè adscitos, privatim colunto. Cicero, de Legibus, lib. ii. c. 8. Op. tom. xi. p. 371. edit. Bipont.

[2] Valerius Maximus, lib. i. c. 3. § 3. p. 44. edit. Bipont.

[3] Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. i. p. 52. and note (15.)

[4] Tacit. Annal. lib. ii. c. 85. Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. xviii. c. 3. Suetonius, in Tiberio, c. 36. Pliny, Hist. Nat. lib. xxx. c. 4. tom. v. p. 48. edit. Bipont.

[5] Suetonius, in Claudio, c. 25.

[6] Suetonius, in Domitiano, c. 10.; in Vespasiano, c. 13.

[7] See p. 179. *supra.*

[8] "Taking away the lives, the fortunes, the liberty, any of the rights of our brethren, merely for serving their Maker in such manner as they are persuaded they ought, when by so doing they hurt not human society, or any member of it, materially, is evidently inconsistent with all justice and humanity: for it is punishing those who have not injured us, and who, if they mistake, deserve only pity from us." Archbp. Secker's Works, vol. iii. p. 271. In the following pages the learned prelate exposes the sinfulness of persecution for conscience-sake, in a masterly manner, and shows that persecution is not of Christian but of *heathen* origin.

not the friends, but the enemies of the Gospel, — not sincere believers, but apostates and atheists, — who have been the most cruel oppressors and persecutors both of civil and religious liberty. Of this we have a signal and memorable instance in the history of France during the revolution, where, not merely the usurped power of the papal antichrist was subverted, but the Christian religion itself was proscribed, and atheism, with all its attendant horrors, substituted in its place.[1]

SECT. II.

THE WONDERFUL HARMONY AND INTIMATE CONNECTION, SUBSISTING BETWEEN ALL THE PARTS OF SCRIPTURE, IS A FURTHER PROOF OF ITS DIVINE AUTHORITY AND ORIGINAL.

THE HARMONY AND INTIMATE CONNECTION subsisting between all the parts of Scripture are no mean proof of its authority and divine original.

Other historians differ continually from each other: the errors of the first writers are constantly criticised and corrected by succeeding adventurers, and their mistakes are sure to meet with the same treatment from those who come after them. Nay, how often does it happen, that contemporary writers contradict each other in relating a fact which has happened in their own time, and within the sphere of their own knowledge? But in the Scriptures there is no dissent or contradiction. They are not a book compiled by a single author, nor by many hands acting in confederacy in the same age; for in such case there would be no difficulty in composing a consistent scheme; nor would it be astonishing to find the several parts in a just and close connection. But most of the writers of the Scriptures lived at very different times, and in distant places, through the long space of about sixteen hundred years; so that there could be no confederacy or collusion; and yet their relations agree with, and mutually support each other. Not only human historians, but philosophers even of the same school, disagree concerning their tenets; whereas the two testaments, like the two cherubs (Exod. xxv. 20.), look steadfastly towards each other, and towards the mercy-seat which they encompass. The holy writers, men of different education, faculties, and occupations, — prophets, evangelists, apostles, (some of whom were princes or priests, others were shepherds or fishermen,)—notwithstanding the diversity of time and place, the variety of matter, consisting of mysteries of providence as well as mysteries of faith, yet all concur uniformly in carrying on one consistent plan of supernatural doctrines; all constantly propose the same invariable truth, flowing from the same fountain through different channels. Go, then, to the sacred Scriptures; examine them closely and critically. Can you find *one* writer controverting the statements or opinions of his predecessor? one historian who disputes any fact which another had stated? Is there in the prophets any discrepancy in doctrines, precepts, or predictions? However they vary in style, or manner of

[1] Compare pp. 29, 30. *suprà*. On the subject above discussed, the reader will find many interesting facts and profound observations in Mr. Fuller's Gospel its own Witness, part i. ch. 5. pp. 62—70. See also Mr. Haldane's Evidence and Authority of Divine Revelation, vol. i. pp. 42—68.

illustration, the sentiment and the morality are the same. In their predictions they exceed one another in particularity and clearness, but where is there any contradiction? The same remarks apply to the New Testament. The leading doctrines of Christianity harmonise together: one writer may enlarge upon and explain what another has said, may add to his account, and carry it further; but he *never* contradicts him. It is self-evident that the corruption of human nature, our reconciliation to God by the atonement of Christ, and the restoration of our primitive dignity by the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, are all parts of one whole, united in close dependence and mutual congruity. The same essential agreement, and the same mutual dependency of one upon another, obtains also among the chief *practical precepts*, as well as between the *doctrines* and precepts of Christianity. Those tend to form the temper and character which these require. Whence, then, arises this harmony of Scripture? Had the writers been under no peculiar divine influence, they would have reasoned and speculated like others, and their writings would have opposed each other. But if they were inspired,—if they all wrote and spoke under the influence of the same spirit,—then is this harmony accounted for; and it is impossible to account for it upon any other principle. Hence we may conclude that all Scripture is not only genuine and authentic, but divinely inspired.[1]

In opposition to this view of the harmony subsisting between the sacred writers, it has repeatedly been objected that there are contradictions both to morality as well as among the different writers themselves; and thence it has been inferred that they cannot have been inspired. It is, however, worthy of remark, that the greater part of those who of late years have been most forward to charge the Scriptures with contradictions, have been utterly incompetent to judge of the matter; having borrowed their objections from preceding opposers of revelation; who, instead of directing their attention to the original languages in which the Scriptures are written, have founded their objections on various translations in the modern languages of Europe. But the contradictions, as they are termed, are *seeming* only, and not real; they perplex only superficial readers; nor is there one single instance that does not admit of a rational solution. The collation of manuscripts, a little skill in criticism in the Hebrew and Greek languages, their idioms and properties, and in the antiquities and customs of those countries where the scenes mentioned in the Scriptures lay, and the affairs were transacted, will clear the main difficulties, and a careful distinction of the different senses of words, as well as of the different subjects and times, together with the occasions on which the various books were written, will frequently remove the seeming contradictions, and render the harmony between the sacred

[1] "Whence, but from heaven, could men unskill'd in arts,
In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths? Or how or why
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?
Unask'd their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price." — DRYDEN.

writers as clear as the light of day. If some difficulties should still remain, let them be viewed as we do those of creation and providence; and they will form no objection to the reception of the Gospel. There is little doubt but that, like the others, with increasing know ledge, they also will be dispelled.[1]

SECT. III.

THE PRESERVATION OF THE SCRIPTURES, A PROOF OF THEIR TRUTH AND DIVINE ORIGIN.

As the wonderful harmony and connection of all the parts of Scripture cannot *rationally* be ascribed to any other cause than their being all dictated by the same spirit of wisdom and foreknowledge; so also is their astonishing and (we may say) MIRACULOUS PRESERVATION a strong instance of God's providential care, a constant sanction and confirmation of the truth contained in them, continued by him without intermission in all ages of the church. Whence comes it, that while the histories of *mighty empires* are lost in the waste of time, the very names of their founders, conquerors, and legislators are consigned with their bodies to the silence and oblivion of the grave? Whence comes it that the history of a mean, insignificant people, and the settlement of God's church, should from its very beginning, which is coëval with the world itself, to this day remain full and complete?[2] Whence comes it that nothing is left of innumerable volumes of philosophy and polite literature, in the preservation of which the admiration and care of all mankind seemed to conspire, and that the Scriptures have, in spite of all opposition, come down to our time entire and genuine? During the captivity, the Urim and Thummim, the ark itself, and every glory of the Jewish worship, was lost; during the profanation of Antiochus (1 Macc. i. 56, 57.) whosoever was found with the book of the law was put to death, and every copy that could be found burned with fire; the same impious artifice was put in practice by several Roman emperors during their persecutions of the Christians, especially by Dioclesian, who triumphed in his supposed success against them.[3] After the most barbarous havoc of them, he issued an edict, commanding them, on pain of death under the most cruel forms, to deliver up their Bibles. Though many complied with this sanguinary edict, the greater part disregarded it; and notwithstanding these, and numberless other calamities, the sacred volumes have survived, pure and uncorrupted, to the present time. It is not necessary to mention that more than Egyptian

[1] On the contradictions which are falsely alleged to exist in the sacred writings, see the Appendix to this Volume, Nos. VIII. and IX. *infrà*.

[2] There is a chasm in the Jewish history of nearly two hundred and fifty years; viz. between the death of Nehemiah and the time of the Maccabees; but Judæa being, during that period, a province of Syria, and under the prefecture of it, the history of the Jews is of course involved in that of the country to which they were subject.—This was the case during the captivity.

[3] See an account of the persecution of the Christians by Dioclesian (which was continued with unrelenting fury by Maximin), in Dr. Lardner's Heathen Testimonies, chap. xl. Works, 8vo. vol. vii. pp. 293—329. 4to. vol. iv. pp. 273—295.

darkness which overwhelmed religion for several centuries; during which any falsification was secure, especially in the Old Testament, the Hebrew language being entirely unknown to all but the Jews; and yet they have, in spite of their prejudices, preserved with scrupulous care even those passages which most confirm the Christian religion; the providence of God having been graciously pleased to make their blindness a standing evidence of the truth of the Scriptures, and their obstinacy an instrument to maintain and promote his doctrine and his kingdom. To this may be added, the present low state of many churches, and the total annihilation of others, of which nothing now remains but the Scriptures translated for their use; happy in this respect, that their particular misfortune is of service to the general cause, inasmuch as so many copies in so many different languages, preserved under so many untoward circumstances, and differing from each other in no essential point, are a wonderful proof of their authenticity, authority, and divinity. All the designs of the enemies of the Scriptures, whether ancient or modern, have been defeated. The Bible still exists, and is triumphant, and doubtless will exist as long as there is a church in the world, that is, until the end of time and the consummation of all things.

SECT. IV.

THE TENDENCY OF THE SCRIPTURES TO PROMOTE THE PRESENT AND ETERNAL HAPPINESS OF MANKIND, CONSTITUTES ANOTHER UNANSWERABLE PROOF OF THEIR DIVINE INSPIRATION.

THE page of history shows that no regular government was ever established without some religion; as if the former was defective without the latter, and the one was a necessary appendage to the other. And it also shows, particularly in the case of the Romans, that while nations cherished a regard for morality and for the sacred obligation of an oath, prosperity attended them[1], but that when

[1] The testimony of the historian Polybius to the beneficial effects of the pagan superstition in fortifying the sentiments of moral obligation, and supporting the sanctity of oaths, is so weighty and decisive, that it would be an injustice to the subject not to insert it; more especially as it is impossible to attribute it to the influence of credulity on the author himself, who was evidently a sceptic. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that all the benefits which might in any way flow from superstition, are secured to an incomparably greater degree by the belief of true religion. "But among all the useful institutions (says Polybius) that demonstrate the superior excellence of the Roman government, the most considerable, perhaps, is the opinion which people are taught to hold concerning the gods; and that, which other men regard as an object of disgrace, appears, in my judgment, to be the very thing by which this republic is chiefly sustained, — I mean superstition, which is impressed with all its terrors, and influences the private actions of the citizens and the public administration of the state, to a degree that can scarcely be exceeded. The ancients, therefore, acted not absurdly, nor without good reason, when they inculcated the notions concerning the gods, and the belief of infernal punishments; but much rather *are those of the present age to be charged with rashness and absurdity* in endeavouring to extirpate these opinions; for, not to mention other effects that flow from such an institution, if among the Greeks, for example, a single talent only be intrusted to those who have the management of any of the public money, though they give ten written sureties, with as many seals, and twice as many witnesses, they are unable to discharge the trust reposed in them with integrity. But the Romans, on the other hand, who in the course of their magistracies and in embassies disburse the greatest sums, are prevailed on, by the single obligation of

immorality became universal, their power and prosperity as rapidly declined. That religion, or virtue, as founded upon reverence of God and the expectation of future rewards and punishments, is of vast public importance, is one of those self-evident axioms, in which all thinking persons instantly acquiesce. It has, however, been reserved for our own times to witness the bold assertion, that "it is a public injury," and to have the question triumphantly demanded, "Who that has read the page of history will venture to say that it has been a benefit to any nation or society of people, in which it has been adopted?"

What the deadly effects of infidelity have been, is known to every one who is in any degree conversant with the history of modern Europe for the last sixty or seventy years,—viz. anarchy, immorality, profaneness, murders innumerable, confusion, and every evil work.[1] What have been the effects actually produced by Christianity, an appeal to the pages of history will readily show. It is not, indeed, the object of the Gospel to gratify idle curiosity and afford us barren and speculative knowledge. It every where aims directly at the heart, and through the heart, to influence the life. Nothing is wanting to remedy the actual state of the world, and to fit men for the worship and felicity of heaven, but that they should believe and obey the Bible.[2] Were all men thus *sincerely and cordially* to believe and obey it as a divine revelation, how would the *moral face* of the world be changed! How would the wilderness and the solitary place be glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose! Wherever, indeed, it has thus been embraced, the most beneficial effects *have been* the result. A *brief* review of the POSITIVE BENEFITS produced by Christianity on the political and moral state of society, and also in private life, will show that it is and could only be of heavenly origin, and afford a satisfactory refutation of the cavils of its enemies.[3]

I. The writings of the earliest professors of Christianity prove that the first converts were *reformed* characters, and the DEFENCES or

an oath, to perform their duty with inviolable honesty. And, as in other states a man is rarely to be found whose hands are pure from public robbery, so among the Romans it is no less rare to discover one that is tainted with this crime."—Hampton's Polybius, vol. ii. book vi. pp. 405, 406.

Though the system of paganism is justly condemned by reason and Scripture, yet it assumed as true several principles of the first importance to the preservation of public manners; such as a persuasion of invisible power, of the folly of incurring the divine vengeance for the attainment of any present advantage, and the divine approbation of virtue: so that, strictly speaking, it was the mixture of truth in it which gave it all its utility.—Hall's Discourse on Infidelity. (Sermons, p. 73. note.)

[1] See a few instances of the effects of atheism, *suprà*, pp. 29—32.; and also, *infrà*, pp. 427—429.

[2] "If," says a late eloquent antagonist of Christianity,—"If all were perfect Christians, individuals would do their duty; the people would be obedient to the laws; the chiefs just; the magistrates incorrupt; the soldiers would despise death; and there would be neither vanity nor luxury in such a state."—ROUSSEAU, Du Contract Social, liv. iv. ch. 8.

[3] The following statement of the inestimable blessings conferred by Christianity on the world, is chiefly abridged from Dr. Ryan's elaborate "History of the Effects of Religion on Mankind," (3d edit. 8vo. Edinburgh, 1806,) collated with Bp. Porteus's Tract on the Beneficial Effects of Christianity. This subject is also copiously and satisfactorily treated by Mr. R. Blakey in "The Temporal Benefits of Christianity exemplified in its influence on the social, intellectual, civil, and political condition of mankind, from its first promulgation to the present day." London, 1849, 8vo.

APOLOGIES, which many of them published against the accusations of unbelievers, also demonstrate the virtues that adorned the primitive Christians.

Thus, although it was not the object of the apostle Paul to point out the influence of his preaching, but to exhort men to virtue, yet some incidental passages of his writings evince that he reformed the manners of his converts, and rendered them ashamed of their former vices. In his Epistle to the Romans he thus expresses himself: — *What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of these things is death. But now being made free from sin and become the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.* (Rom. vi. 21, 22.) This apostle also, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, observes that some of them were reclaimed by the Gospel: — *Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor idolaters, nor effeminate persons, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but ye are washed, ye are sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* (1 Cor. vi. 9—11.) Peter, in the following passage, alludes to the reformation wrought among the Jewish converts in Pontus, Galatia, and other countries: — *The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lust, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries, wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot.* (1 Pet. iv. 3, 4.)

The various Christian apologists, whom the persecutions of the pagans compelled to vindicate their character and conduct, have borne ample testimony to their exemplary lives and conversation. Among these, the attestations of Justin Martyr and Athenagoras (both of whom had been heathen philosophers), Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Origen, and Lactantius, are particularly worthy of notice; but the limits of this work compel us to admit only two or three.

1. From the following passage of JUSTIN MARTYR, who flourished about the middle of the second century, it is manifest that a mighty change was wrought, in his time, on the proselytes to the Gospel. "We," says the philosopher, "who formerly delighted in vicious excesses, now are temperate and chaste; — we who formerly had recourse to magical arts, have now dedicated ourselves to the good and unbegotten God; — we who formerly placed our greatest pleasure in acquiring wealth and possessions, now bring all that we have into a common stock, and impart to every one in need; — we who hated and destroyed each other, and on account of the difference of manners refused to live with men of a different tribe, now, since the appearance of Christ, live on terms of familiar intercourse with them, and pray for our enemies; and endeavour to persuade those who hate us without a cause to live conformably to the perfect precepts of Christ, to the end that they may become partakers with us of the same joyful hope of a reward from God the Ruler over all."[1]

[1] Apol. c. 17. (p. 61. B. Paris edit.)

2. "We deny not," says TERTULLIAN (who lived about sixty years later than Justin), "a piedge left with us; we defile no man's marriage-bed: we piously educate orphans, relieve the indigent, and render no man evil for evil. The husband, now cured of his former jealousy, expels his now virtuous wife from his house; the father, so tender of his undutiful heathen son, disinherits him when he becomes a Christian and obedient to his will; and the master, hitherto so kind to a faithless servant, discards him on becoming religious and faithful. So much is the Christian name hated, notwithstanding the advantages of the Gospel, that the husband prefers a false wife, the father a rebellious son, and the master a knavish servant, to having them good and virtuous Christians!"[1]

3. "Inquire," says ORIGEN, in his celebrated reply to the cavils and objections of the philosopher Celsus, written about A.D. 246,—"Inquire into the lives of some amongst us: compare our former and present mode of life, and you will find in what impieties and impurities men were involved before they embraced our doctrines. But since they embraced them, how just, grave, moderate, and constant are they become! yea, some are so inflamed with the love of purity and goodness, as to abstain even from lawful enjoyments: the church abounds with such men, wherever the doctrines of Christianity prevailed. How is it possible they can be pestilent members of society, who have converted many from the sink of vice to the practice of virtue and a life of temperance, conformable to the dictates of right reason? We reclaim women from immodesty, quarrelling with, or parting from their husbands; men from the wild extravagance of the sports and theatres; and restrain youth, who are prone to vice and luxury, by painting, not only the vileness of lust, but the punishment reserved for the vicious and dissolute."[2]

4. "They are not Christians," says LACTANTIUS (who flourished A. D. 306), "but pagans, who rob by land, and commit piracy by sea; who poison their wives for their dowries, or their husbands that they may marry their adulterers; who strangle or expose their infants, commit incest with their daughters, sisters, mothers, or vestals, who prostitute their bodies to unnatural lusts, seek heaven by witchcraft, and commit other crimes odious to relate."[3] The same writer also, contrasting the contradictions between the doctrines, precepts, and practice of the philosophers, and the little effects that resulted from them, with the purity and efficacy of the Gospel, has the following animated passage: "Give me a man who is choleric, abusive in his language, headstrong, and unruly; with a very few words,—the words of God,—I will render him as gentle as a lamb. Give me a greedy, covetous, parsimonious man, and I will presently return him to you a generous creature, freely bestowing his money by handfuls. Give me a cruel and bloodthirsty man; instantly his ferocity shall be transformed into a truly mild and merciful disposition. Give me an

[1] Tertullian, Apol. c. 3.

[2] Origen contra Celsum, lib. i. Origen was singularly eminent for his exemplary learning and piety.

[3] Lactantius, Instit. Divin. lib. v. c. 9. Op. tom. i. pp. 349, 350. Edit. Bipont.

unjust man, a foolish man, a sinful man; and on a sudden he shall become honest, wise, and virtuous. So great is the efficacy of divine wisdom, that when once admitted into the human heart, it expels folly, the parent of all vice; and in accomplishing this great end, there is no occasion for any expense, no absolute need of books, or deep and long study or meditation. The benefit is conferred gratuitously, easily, expeditiously; provided the ears and the heart thirst after wisdom. Did or could any of the heathen philosophers accomplish such important purposes as these?"[1] Thus is the infinite superiority of Christianity evinced, in a moral point of view, over every other system of philosophy. Lactantius, it should be recollected, had himself been a heathen philosopher, and here delivers the result of his own experience.

Though we cannot expect from heathens *direct* testimonies to the virtues of men whom they cruelly persecuted, yet the works of heathen writers incidentally furnish ample and sufficient proofs of their innocence and worth. To adduce one or two instances: — it was a common saying of the heathens, that a person was a good man, *only* he was a Christian. PLINY, in the memorable letter already cited[2], says, on the information of some apostate Christians, that their great crime consisted in assembling together on a stated day before light, to sing hymns to Christ as God; and that they bound themselves by oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, *but* NOT *to be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adultery,* NEVER *to falsify their word,* NOR *to deny a pledge committed to them when called upon to return it.* He adds, that though he put two Christian women *to the torture,* he discovered NOTHING besides a bad and excessive superstition. In the course of time, the perseverance of Christians in a life of exemplary piety prevailed so far that the apostate emperor JULIAN, in an epistle to Arsacius, a heathen pontiff (written A. D. 430[3]), recommended their charities and other virtues to the imitation of the pagans, and desired Arsacius to turn his eyes to the means by which the superstition of the Christians was propagated, viz. by *sanctity of life,* by *kindness to strangers,* and by the *attention they paid to the burial of the dead.* He recommends an imitation of their virtues; exhorts the heathen pontiff to prevail on the priests of Galatia to attend to the worship of the gods; enjoins works of charity; and desires him to relieve the distressed, and build houses for the accommodation of strangers of whatever religion. "*It is,*" adds the emperor, "*a disgrace to the pagans to disregard those of their own* religion, while CHRISTIANS *do kind offices to strangers and enemies.*" From this admission of Julian, it is evident that the Christians were improved in benevolence and morals by the Gospel; and even the heathens were improved by the example of the Christians. These involuntary testimonies of heathens to the innocence and virtues of the primitive Christians, we shall find corroborated by various other proofs, which we now proceed briefly to exhibit.

II. If we advert to the EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY ON SOCIETY

[1] Lactantius, Instit. Divin. lib. iii. c. 26. tom. i. p. 232. Edit. Bipont.
[2] See pp. 178, 179. *suprà.* [3] Julian. Epist. 130.

IN GENERAL, we shall find that the benevolent spirit of the Gospel served as a bond of union between independent nations; broke down the partition which separated the Heathens and Jews, abated their prejudices, and rendered them more liberal to each other. It checked pride and revenge, those sources of war and bloodshed, and promoted humility and forgiveness; it rendered its *sincere* professors just and honest, and inspired them with firmness under persecution. The apostles and evangelists endured the severest sufferings rather than renounce their religion; nor could the primitive Christians who succeeded them be induced by threats or torments to desert their profession. They neither repined nor railed at their enemies, but endured various excruciating torments with invincible meekness, patience, and resignation. Further, wherever the benign influence of the Gospel has penetrated, it has descended into families, and carried with it peace and happiness. The female sex, which is degraded and maltreated in modern heathen nations, as it was among many of the ancient pagan nations, is elevated, wherever the Gospel has spread, to that rank in society to which it is so justly entitled, and the civil, moral, and religious condition of women has been proportionably improved.[1] Polygamy has been abolished, and divorce is permitted,—not to gratify the levity, caprice, or profligacy of either party, (for in Rome at least the women also had the power of divorce, where their licentiousness was equal to that of the men,)—but only in the case of unfaithfulness to the nuptial vow. It is true that, in certain countries of Europe, where the Christian religion has been so far corrupted as to lose nearly all its influence, illicit connections may be formed, adulterous intrigues pursued, and even crimes against nature perpetrated, with but little dishonour. But it is not so in Britain and other Protestant countries, where the Gospel has had a freer course; for, though the same dispositions are discovered in great numbers of persons, yet the fear of the public frown holds most of them in awe. From the lowest degradation and oppression, the female sex has been raised to respect, cultivation, and refinement, to a rank and influence in society, which they possess only in Christian countries where their interest and happiness are uniformly and properly consulted in every important concern in life. We have no public indecencies between the sexes, no law that requires prostitution. If any unnatural crimes be perpetrated, they are not common; much less are they tolerated by the laws, or countenanced by public opinion. On the contrary, the odium which follows such practices is sufficient to stamp the perpetrators of them with perpetual infamy in the land. Rapes, incests, and adulteries, are not only punishable by law, but odious in the estimation of the public. No one can live in the *known* practice of fornication, lying, theft, fraud, or cruelty, and retain his character. It cannot be pleaded in excuse with us, as it is in China or Hindostan (and as the profligate Rousseau pleaded when he sent his illegitimate offspring to the foundling hospital), that *such things are the custom of the country.*

[1] On this subject the reader will find a collection of interesting facts, compiled from various writers, in an "Essay on what Christianity has done for Women," prefixed to the second volume of "Female Scripture Biography, by F. A. Cox, A. M." London, 1817, 2 vols. 8vo.

Further, the harshness of parental authority has been restrained; the barbarous practice of exposing or depriving of life, weak, deformed, or helpless children (which was sanctioned by the laws of many states), has been abolished, and hospitals have been instituted for the preservation of deserted children; and what was then deemed a wise political expedient to rid the state of useless and troublesome members, is now justly considered and punished as the most atrocious of crimes. And that uncontrolled power which was possessed by fathers and husbands, and which rendered the condition of sons worse than that of slaves[1], and exposed wives to the most cruel treatment[2], has been annihilated by the gentle spirit of Christianity. The system of domestic slavery, which subjected the greater part of mankind to the capricious tyranny of a few free-born masters,—who treated and valued them like beasts, while they were sometimes made the sacrifice of a youthful frolic, and murdered in the streets and roads by thousands for amusement,—is fully extinguished; and our own times have witnessed another triumph of Christian benevolence, in the extirpation (at least in the British dominions) of the infamous traffic in human beings; the success of which measure is to be ascribed *principally* to the influence of Christianity in directing public opinion.

Thus, while the Gospel prescribes the best rules for promoting family peace and domestic happiness, it has also removed the great obstacles which have often impeded it. The condition of the inferior and dependent ranks of society has been ameliorated, and every varied form of human suffering finds some alleviation from the active diligence of private benevolence, and the munificent provisions of public charity. The heathens had no public places for the accommodation of the sick, the poor, the widow, or the orphan, nor was there a single hospital in the whole heathen world; whereas every Christian country abounds with charitable institutions for those humane purposes. The flow of beneficence, proceeding from this divine source (especially in this highly favoured country), has scarcely left any means untried for meliorating the sufferings of the poor: it has erected asylums for almost every form of human misery, for all the children of the needy, for the destitute, for the houseless, and for the reformation of criminals. It has extended itself to the abodes of guilt and crime, and has attempted to put within the reach of the prisoner all

[1] "The cruelty of the Roman law, not content with the destruction of infants, extended its severity even to the adult: it considered children not as persons but as *things*, as part of the furniture of the family mansion, which the master of the family might remove, or sell, or destroy, like any other part of the furniture, at his discretion. In one respect, the condition of a son was worse than that of a slave. A slave could only be sold *once*, a son THREE times: and he might be *imprisoned*, *scourged*, *exiled*, or *put to death* by the paterfamilias, without appeal to any other tribunal." (Nieuport de Ritibus Romanis, p. 585.) With respect to daughters, there was an act of power more exquisitely cruel perhaps than all the rest. The father could compel his married daughter to repudiate a husband whom she tenderly loved, and whom he himself had approved. (Esprit des Loix, liv. xxvi. c. 3.) Bp. Porteus's Beneficial Effects of Christianity, in his Tracts, p. 379.

[2] What was, if possible, still more preposterous and intolerable, the wife herself, though the mother perhaps of a numerous family, was subjected, no less than her children, to the paternal authority and despotic will of her husband. She was in the eye of the law considered as his daughter, and might be retained or dismissed at pleasure; and for certain crimes (some of them of a very trivial nature), *might be put to death*. Ibid.

the comforts that are compatible with the strict claims of justice; and it has even reached the inferior animals, by procuring for them gentle treatment, and constituting them objects of legal protection. In vain may we search in the writings of pagan moralists for exhortations to benevolence like this: not a word is to be found in Cicero's Offices, of active and liberal love to the poor, to slaves, to criminals, to the brute creation, in short, to any, except friends and relations, or for merely worldly and selfish purposes; and if *modern* moralists do better, Christianity may claim the praise. What terminated the horrid gladiatorial massacres and murders which destroyed so many thousands of unhappy persons among the Romans?—CHRISTIANITY. What has instituted so many establishments for the reclaiming of the vicious, and for instructing even criminals?—CHRISTIANITY. What has meliorated the condition and procured security to the lives of insolvent debtors, whose misfortunes—not their faults—place them in the power of merciless creditors?—CHRISTIANITY. What has protected widows and orphans against injustice,—orphan princes against usurpers and rebellious subjects,—subjects against exaction and oppression,—the weak against the powerful in suits at law,—the goods and the persons of the shipwrecked against plunderers,—and, in short, every description of persons against the distress which would otherwise have overwhelmed them?—CHRISTIANITY. What has discouraged suicides?—CHRISTIANITY. The heathens very frequently committed suicide agreeably to their religious and philosophical dogmas; but *no* REAL *Christian* can commit this crime without knowing that he is acting contrary to the principles of the Gospel, committing murder, and clearly violating a divine command. What has discouraged the absurd practice of duels, or deciding doubtful or disputed points by single combat, which obtained so generally in the north and west of Europe?—CHRISTIANITY. It is true, that from a false notion of honour, duels continue to be fought, often for the most frivolous or imaginary affronts; but these are not chargeable upon the Gospel, which prohibits murder of every kind; and the men who engage in such duels show by their conduct that though they may *profess and call themselves Christians*, THEY ARE TOTALLY DESTITUTE OF CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLE, and act in utter disregard of the laws of a Christian country (at least of this country), which prohibit them, under severe penalties.[1]

[1] By the law of England, where the parties meet with an intent to murder, (and with what other intent, we may ask, *can* they meet? since challenges are always sent at least one or two days before the duel takes place, so that they meet *deliberately* and with a determination to take each other's lives,—thinking it their duty as *gentlemen*, and claiming it as their right to wanton with their own lives and the lives of others, without any warrant for it either human or divine,)—if one party kills the other, it comes within the notion of murder, and is punishable accordingly. So repugnant indeed is our law that not only the principal who actually kills the other, but also his seconds, are guilty of murder, whether they fought or not; and it is held that the seconds of the party slain are likewise guilty as accessaries. See Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. iv. p. 199.

The modern practice of duelling is considered as absolutely necessary to protect men from insult: but, that it is a mere custom, and unnecessary for that purpose, is evident from the fact, that females, the Christian societies called Quakers, and Unitas Fratrum or United Brethren, and ministers of the Gospel, are scarcely more insulted than the man who will fight. "It is strange," Dr. Ryan remarks with equal force and justice, "that

III. From society, generally, let us ascend to the influence of Christianity on the RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT OF STATES AND COUNTRIES.

Wherever the Gospel has spread, we have the most satisfactory evidence of its mighty efficacy as a means of improving the present condition of man. Polytheism and idolatry, together with human sacrifices, and all their attendant cruelties and profligate immoralities, have been abolished. And as soon as nations and governments became Christian, they were actuated by that mild, benevolent, and generous spirit, which the early believers had displayed even in the midst of calumny, insult, and persecution. Those princes who embraced Christianity became more humble than their heathen predecessors, blended Christian morality with their civil institutes, and transcribed into their political codes the humanity and benevolence inspired by their religion. Fewer kings were murdered and fewer revolutions took place in Christian than in pagan states. It is the power of the Gospel alone that has greatly reformed the laws of nations[1], and has diminished the horrors of war. That it has not hitherto been sufficient to banish unjust wars from the earth is true; and, as

fighting should be considered a proof of the truth, honour, or honesty of the duellist: a man may possess personal courage without another good quality. The liar, the knave, the seducer of his friend's wife, will fight. He who was a villain before he fought will still be a villain, and, in some cases, a greater villain than if he had declined the combat. * [If a man is so grossly insulted, that his religious principle is not sufficiently strong to support him under the affront, let him challenge the aggressor, form a resolution not to fire, and commit this resolution, sealed up, to his second. If he escapes, let him prosecute at law; if he is killed, let his friends prosecute for a wanton and unprovoked murder.] * I knew a gentleman, who had fought many duels, receive a challenge for a trifling offence; he made an apology, which the challenger did not accept of, but insisted on a meeting. When the challenged went to the ground, he carried a paper, stating the offence, his offer of an apology, his private resolution not to fire, with a direction to his friends to prosecute for murder, if he should fall. The challenger fired without effect; his antagonist did not fire, but prosecuted him at law, and caused him to be imprisoned. Though the challenger was thus punished for firing, it is probable he would have escaped unpunished if he had killed his opponent, as juries are in the habit of perjuring themselves in support of this practice. They find a man guilty of a breach of the peace who sends a challenge, or fires without hitting, but acquit him if he kills in consequence of that challenge! Their usual verdict, that the survivor killed in his own defence, is GENERALLY FALSE, *because self-preservation seldom requires a man to kill his antagonist.* Where the combatants are supposed to fire at the same instant, each stands as good a chance of escaping, where he reserves his shot, as where he discharges it, provided his opponent is not apprised of his intention. He defends his honour by standing his adversary's fire, and his reserved shot protects his own life and that of his antagonist. He, therefore, who unnecessarily kills, has no claim to impunity on the plea of self-defence, and juries who urge that plea are absolutely perjured. The jury-man, however, has precedents for disregarding his oath: most juries perjured themselves in the same way, and he is satisfied; as if he was not accountable to God, and to society, for his perjury, and for the evils which generally arise from the encouragement of duels." (Dr. Ryan's History of the Effects of Religion on Mankind, pp. 121, 122.) Most of the preceding observations are equally applicable to the disgusting and brutal practice of prize-fighting.

[1] The beneficial "Influence of Christianity upon International Law" is well illustrated by Mr. C. M. Kennedy, in his Hulsean Prize Essay. Cambridge, 1856.

** A correspondent, since the publication of the sixth edition, has objected that the sentences, above printed between brackets, may mislead a weak Christian to think that he was allowed to send and receive a challenge. As these sentences form an integral part of a quotation from Dr. Ryan, the author of the present work does not consider himself at liberty to omit them. But whoever calmly and attentively weighs the *whole* of the quotation above given, and the context of the note in which it occurs, must come to the conclusion that ALL duels are contrary to the word of God and to the spirit of Christianity. *Note to the seventh edition.*

an acute writer has forcibly remarked, "it would have been wonderful if it had, seeing it has never yet been *cordially* embraced by the majority, nor perhaps by the preponderating part of any nation. Nevertheless, it *has* had its influence;"[1] and that influence has been of the most beneficial kind for the happiness of man. For the cold inhumanity which considered war, not as the greatest scourge of the human race, but as the prime business and most exquisite gratification of life;—the restless ambition, passion for martial achievements, and ferocious rapacity which produced the most unprovoked aggressions; — the implacable and vindictive spirit with which wars were carried on, and which, consequently, for many ages, overwhelmed the world with bloodshed, ruin, and desolation; — that relentless cruelty which condemned the unhappy captive to perpetual slavery or to an ignominious death (sometimes by torture) by the hand of the executioner; — the desolations of whole countries, together with the utter destruction of flourishing and opulent cities, and that relentless cruelty which spared not from massacre and extermination the unoffending female, the helpless infant, and the decrepitude of old age; — these are outrages of which we seldom, if ever, hear in the wars carried on by professing Christians, though nothing was more frequent among the most polished nations of antiquity, and those most celebrated for their private and public virtue. (Such were the *pagan* notions of virtue!)

"It is the spirit of Christianity alone which, moderating the views of sovereigns and states, and directing the measures of government to the legitimate objects of its institution, viz. the promotion of the welfare of society and the preservation of its moral interests, leads to an equitable consideration of the rights and independence of other nations, and to an unremitted regard to the well-being of the community over which it presides. It is the spirit of just and reasonable policy which inspires rulers with a desire of fulfilling the intentions of God, who appointed them *as a terror to evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well;* teaching them to promote, upon general and permanent principles, the interests of every class of society, and to ground the confidence of power on the observance of the just claims of every department."[2] Hence the ancient fierceness of despotism, where such a form of government still exists, has been limited and assuaged. Those arbitrary laws and that perversion and corruption of justice which prevailed at Athens, and especially at Rome, during the latter periods of the republic, have disappeared from the codes of Christian states, especially in our own country. These great civil blessings, it may be safely affirmed, are in a great degree owing to the influence which the spirit of Christianity has had on our civil constitution (with which it is so closely and essentially interwoven, that it is part of the common law of England[3]), on the temper of our governors and of the people, on the temper of the laws, and of those who framed them, as well as of those who administer them. It is this holy influence

[1] Fuller's Gospel its own Witness, p. 134.
[2] Bp. Gray's Connection of Sacred and Profane Literature, vol. i. p. 219.
[3] Blackstone's Commentaries, by Professor Christian, vol. iv. p. 59. and note (5.)

of Christianity principally "which, by mitigating in some degree the rancour of contending factions against each other, and inspiring them with some little share of mutual charity and forbearance, has hitherto preserved this country from those scenes of carnage and devastation that stain and disgrace the annals of ancient history. It is this which has in general restrained our provincial governors from exceeding the bounds of equity and humanity in their administration; and has carried even to our most distant colonies a large share of the freedom, the justice, the ease, the tranquillity, the security, and prosperity of the parent state. It is this, in fine, which has impressed on the minds of our magistrates and our judges that strong sense of duty to God, to man, and to their country, that sacred regard to justice and rectitude which renders them beyond all example, impartial, upright, and uncorrupt; which secures to every rank of men the equal benefit of the laws, which extends to the meanest their protection, and brings the greatest under their control."[1]

IV. But the blessings conferred by Christianity on the world are not confined to ameliorating the moral, civil, religious, and political condition of mankind: the most polished nations, now in existence, are indebted to it for the preservation and diffusion of literature and the elegant arts of painting, statuary, architecture, and music. Christianity has been instrumental in preserving and disseminating moral, classical, and theological KNOWLEDGE, in every nation where it has been established. The Law, the Gospel, the comments on them, and the works of the fathers, were written in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin: so that a knowledge of these three languages became indispensably necessary to every man who wished to be an intelligent Christian. Christianity being contained in books, the use of letters became necessary to its teachers; nor could learning have been entirely lost, while there was an order of men, who were obliged to possess a moderate share of it, to qualify them for the priesthood, and entitle them to its emoluments. In the time of Tacitus (A.D. 108)[2], the German nation were strangers to letters; and the two following facts prove that other nations were likely to continue illiterate, had not the teachers of the Gospel exerted themselves for their instruction. The Goths, having made themselves masters of Athens (A.D. 270), brought together into one heap all the books they found there, and would have consumed the valuable treasure, had not one of them told his companions, that while the Greeks amused themselves with those they neglected the art of war, and were easily overcome.[3] Theodoric, a Gothic prince (A.D. 293), would not suffer the children of his subjects to be instructed in the sciences; imagining, that such instruction enervated the mind, rendered men unfit for martial exploits; and that the boy who trembled at the rod, would never look undaunted at the sword or spear.[4] But no sooner was Christianity propagated among barbarians, than they were instructed in the use of letters. Ulphilas, a

[1] Bp. Porteus's Tracts, p. 383.
[2] De Moribus Germ. c. ii. iii.
[3] Zonaras, Annal. lib. xii. c. 26. Gibbon's Hist. vol. i. p. 434.
[4] Procop. De Bello Goth. lib. i. c. 2.

Gothic bishop (A.D. 380), invented letters for his illiterate countrymen, translated the Bible into the vulgar tongue for their use, and instructed them in its doctrines; and some Goths soon became so well informed, that they compared their version with the Latin, the Greek, and the Hebrew originals.[1] Before the introduction of Christianity in Ireland, the natives had no alphabet, no annals but their verses, nor any thing but memory to preserve their verses, their antiquities, the genealogies of their kings, and the exploits of their heroes. The more verses a man could repeat the more learned he was deemed, while the bard who composed any thing new was sure of being respected by the kings and people.[2] This was the state of the Irish, when the Christian missionaries came to instruct them in the use of letters, and in the truths of the Gospel. Such a change, however, was wrought in them by Christianity and its teachers, that Ireland was styled the island of very pious and very learned men. Ansgarius[3], the chief apostle of the northern nations, not only preached the Gospel to those barbarians, but established schools for the instruction of youth in religion and letters. Cyril and Methodius[4], who converted the Bulgarians, Moravians, and Bohemians, about the same time, previously invented the Slavic alphabet, and translated the Bible, and some Greek and Latin authors, into the Slavic tongue, for the purpose of expanding their narrow minds, and softening their hard hearts to mildness and pity. Nearly the same may be said of other barbarians who became proselytes of the Gospel. In Russia the teachers of Christianity recommended, at the same time, the Gospel and letters, the rudiments of the arts, of law, and order; and were seconded in their exertions by religious princes, who employed skilful Greeks for decorating the cities, and for the instruction of the people. "The dome and paintings of [the famous Cathedral of] St. Sophia at Constantinople were rudely copied in the Russian churches of Kiow and Novogorod; the writings of the fathers were translated into the Sclavonic language; and three hundred noble youths were invited, or compelled, to attend lectures in the college of Jaroslaus."[5] In various parts of Europe, edifices for divine worship arose under the fostering care of the clergy, aided by the munificence of sovereigns and of the laity; and though these were sometimes influenced by unworthy motives, yet the effect has not been the less beneficial to the arts of painting, design, architecture, and music, whose professors were encouraged to the exertion of their talents by liberal remuneration. When, however, the love of literature was succeeded by the love of arms (which was particularly the case during the middle ages) few had inducements to study, except those who were educated and destined for the sacred office; nor could a knowledge of the Greek and Roman classics have been propagated so universally as it was, had not the clergy found them necessary for understanding the Scriptures and the works of the fathers. By these means, they possessed most of the learning of those times, and handed it down to their successors,

[1] Socrat. lib. iv. c. 32. Sozom. lib. vi. c. 36. Philostorg. lib. ii. c. 5.
[2] Bollandi Acta, March xvii.
[3] Mabillion, Annal. 826.
[4] Balbini Miscell. part i.
[5] Gibbon's Hist. vol. x. p. 244.

who had the merit of collecting, transcribing, and preserving books, which otherwise must have perished, when a taste for erudition was almost extinct, and the passion of laymen was directed to arms.[1]

On the subversion of the Greek empire by the Mohammedans, in 1453, literature took refuge in the west of Europe, where many of the clergy were among its most strenuous supporters. At length, learning emerged from the silence of the cloister, whither she had retreated, and where she had been preserved from destruction; and her appearance was followed by a revival of all the blessings which she so eminently bestows. The Reformation promoted, still more, the cause of learning; and its general diffusion has been aided most signally by the discovery and almost universal adoption of the art of printing. The modern opposers of revelation, however, reasoning in a retrograde motion, ascribe all our improvements to philosophy. *But it was religion, the* RELIGION OF CHRIST, *that took the lead.* The Reformers opened to us the Scriptures, and broke all those fetters that shackled human reason. Philosophy crept humbly in her train, profited by her labours and sufferings; and now ungratefully claims all the honour and praise to herself. Luther, Melancthon, and Cranmer preceded Lord Bacon, Boyle, Newton, and Locke. The horrible excesses that will for ever disgrace the annals of the first French revolution are not chargeable upon Christianity. The French nation renounced Christianity before they plunged into such crimes. Philosophy and reason were their boasted guides. Besides, Christianity ought not to be charged with all the crimes of those who have assumed its name. *No* institution has ever been able to prevent all the excesses which it forbad; nor is it peculiar to the Christian revelation, that it has *sometimes* furnished a pretext for introducing those very evils and oppressions, which it was designed to remedy.[2] But the mischiefs which, through the corrupt passions of men, have been the *accidental* consequences of Christianity, ought not to be imputed to its spirit. "The Legislator of the universe, in promulgating the sublime laws of

[1] The *Literary Benefits* conferred on the world by Christianity, are thus concisely but forcibly stated by Dr. Jortin. "To whom," says he, "are we indebted for the knowledge of antiquities, sacred and secular, for every thing that is called *Philology*, or the *Literæ Humaniores?* To Christians. To whom, for grammars and dictionaries of the learned languages? To Christians. To whom, for chronology, and the continuation of history through many centuries? To Christians. To whom, for rational systems of morality and of natural religion? To Christians. To whom, for improvements in natural philosophy, and for the application of these discoveries to religious purposes? To Christians. To whom, for metaphysical researches, carried as far as the subject will permit? To Christians. To whom, for the moral rules to be observed by nations in war and peace? To Christians. To whom, for jurisprudence and political knowledge, and for settling the *rights of subjects*, both civil and religious, upon a proper foundation? To Christians — not to atheists or deists, some of whom (as Hobbes in particular) have been known advocates for tyranny." (Jortin's Sermons, vol. vii. pp. 373, 374.) He further observes, that some of the atheistical and deistical writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (and the remark is equally applicable to those of our own times) were "ignorant and illiterate, most of them a sort of half-scholars, and retailers of second-hand wares, none of them eminently learned, or contributors to the advancement of erudition and knowledge in any material article." (Ibid. p. 373.)

[2] On the subject above noticed, the reader will find some excellent and forcible remarks in Dr. Dewar's Discourses illustrative of the Designs of Christianity, Disc. 13. entitled "The Imperfection of Christians no valid Objection to Christianity."

Christianity, — though he furnished men with motives calculated to elevate them to his throne, and to extend their hopes far beyond the grave, — did not at the same time transform the intelligent creatures, to whom he gave those laws, into mere machines. *He has given them the power either to conform to Christian precepts or to infringe them;* and thus has placed in their own hands their own destiny. If, after this, a great many of them reject the good and choose the evil, the fault is manifestly theirs, and not his, who by so many the most tremendous denunciations, warns them against the latter, and by the most alluring invitations solicits them to the former." Were all men to become *sincere* believers in the heavenly doctrines of the Gospel, and were all *honestly* disposed to obey its holy precepts, nothing is better calculated to diffuse real comfort, peace, and happiness in this world. Indeed, whoever will candidly and attentively compare the morals of professing Christians throughout the world, defective as they are, with those of the heathen nations in a similar stage of society, will be convinced that the effects of Christianity have been exceedingly beneficial. Some vices were not forbidden, while others were applauded, by the ancients; but the vices of the Christian, the sins of the heart as well as the life, are *all* forbidden by the Gospel. It has silently communicated innumerable blessings to individuals. Besides those enumerated in the preceding pages[1], we may observe that, through its blessed influence, crimes are less malignant; the manners of mankind are softened and humanised, to a degree unknown in ancient times; a more general respect is paid to the decency of external appearances, and to the sentiments of virtuous and pious men; and although much wickedness still remains among the *nominal* professors of the Christian faith, who are Christians in name, but little better than heathens in practice, yet a large portion of piety and virtue silently exists among the middle and lower classes of mankind, who in every age and

[1] "Much general reformation and happiness, in various ways, hath been introduced into the world by the Gospel, both among individuals, and among nations. But even on a supposition it had been otherwise, it proves nothing against the good effects of Christianity, if it were properly obeyed. It only proves, that notwithstanding the purity of the Gospel, and its gracious intention of making mankind religious and happy, there are numbers who will not be made religious and happy by it. But what could God Almighty do more for man, consistently with leaving him at liberty to act freely? He could only give him a rule to walk by, and reason to enforce that rule; unless he had changed his nature, and, by giving him a new religion, had wrought a standing miracle to force his obedience to it. So that, of course, the world will always be divided into two sorts of people — such as are deaf to all the calls of religion; and such as live up to its rules. Among these latter only are to be found those who feel the happiness of living under Gospel laws. It would be a wonderful thing, indeed, if those should profit by them, who never trouble their heads about them. The patient, who rejects the medicine, must not hope to remove the disease. Our Saviour himself, you remember, prophesied, in the parable of the sower, of the different reception which his Gospel should meet among different men. Some seed, he tells you, would fall among thorns, and be choked — others on beaten ground, and be picked up — but that still there would be some which would fall on good ground, and bring forth fruit in abundance. The Christian religion, therefore, is not meant to work by force, or like a charm, on the minds of men. If it did, there could be no goodness in the observance of it; but it is intended mercifully to guide those to happiness, who will listen to its gracious voice. So that when we look into the world, and wish to see the effects of religion, we must look for it only among real Christians — among those who truly live up to its laws — and not among those who happen to live in a Christian country, and are Christians only in name." Gilpin's Sermons, vol. iii. pp. 9—11.

country form the greatest part of the community. Nay, in Christian countries, even the wicked themselves (who have not cast off all religion, and deliberately renounced the Gospel) are greatly restrained by the fear of future punishments, which are so clearly set forth in the Gospel. So that mankind are, upon the whole, even in a temporal point of view, under infinite obligations to the mild and pacific temper of the Gospel, and have reaped more substantial worldly benefits from it, than from any other institution upon earth; and, whatever of sobriety or moral virtue is to be found either in the writings or lives of the opposers of revelation in modern times, they are indebted for it to that very Christianity which they are impotently endeavouring to subvert. "To say nothing of the best ideas of the old philosophers on moral subjects being derived from revelation (of which there is considerable evidence[1]), it is manifest that, so far as the moderns exceed them, it is principally, if not entirely, owing to this medium of instruction. The Scriptures having diffused the light, they have insensibly imbibed it; and finding it to accord with reason, they flatter themselves that *their* reason has discovered it. 'After grazing,' as one expresses it, 'in the pastures of revelation, they boast of growing fat by nature.' So long as they reside among people, whose ideas of right and wrong are formed by the morality of the Gospel, they must (unless they wish to be stigmatised as profligates) behave with some degree of decorum. Where the conduct is uniform and consistent, charity, and even justice, will lead us to put the best construction upon the motive; but when we see men uneasy under restraints, and continually writing in favour of vices which they dare not openly practise, we are justified in imputing their sobriety not to principle, but to the circumstances attending their situation."[2]

V. It were no difficult task to adduce, from the page of history, numerous FACTS that would fully confirm the preceding general survey of the effects produced by the influence of Christianity. A few additional instances, however, must suffice. Wherever Christian missionaries have gone, the most barbarous heathen nations have be-

[1] A glance at the devotions of the Gentiles will show that, with very few exceptions, there was nothing spiritual in their prayers, — no thanksgiving, — no request for divine assistance in the performance of their duty, — no pious sorrow and acknowledgment of their offences. But "after the propagation of the Christian religion, we find forms of adoration in some *Pagan* writers which are more rational and spiritual than the old hymns and prayers of their ancestors; and we may reasonably suppose that these improvements arose from the Gospel. See *Procl.* Hymn. ad Solem, et ad Musas; *Jamblich.* de Myst. Egypt. § 5. c. 26.; *Simpl.* in *Epictet. ad fin.* to whom I wish I could add *Maximus Tyrius.* It is pity that he who on other accounts deserves commendation, should have taught that prayer to God was superfluous, *Disc.* 30. See also *Juvenal* x. 346. and the Commentators. *Seneca* says, *Primus est deorum cultus, deos credere: deinde reddere illis majestatem suam, reddere bonitatem.—Vis deos propitiare? bonus esto. Satis illos coluit quisquis imitatus est.* Epist. 95. p. 470. But that he did not think prayer to be useless and unnecessary, as some may fancy from these words, will appear from the following places. *Nos quoque existimamus vota proficere, salvâ vi et potestate fatorum. Quædam enim a Diis immortalibus ita suspensa relicta sunt, ut in bonum vertant, si admotæ Diis preces fuerint, si vota suscepta.* Nat. Quæst. ii. 57. *Itaque non dat Deus beneficia, — non exaudit precantium voces et undique sublatis in cœlum manibus vota facientium privata ac publica. Quod profecto non fieret, nec in hunc furorem omnes mortales consensissent alloquendi surda numina et inefficaces Deos, nisi nossent illorum beneficia nunc ultro oblata, nunc orantibus data.* De Benef. IV. 4." (Jortin's Discourses on the Christian Religion, p. 267. note.

[2] Fuller's Gospel its own Witness, p. 113.

come civilised. Some of them were cannibals; others worshipped their swords as gods; and all of them offered human victims to their idols. The ferocious became mild; those who prowled about for plunder acquired settled property, as well as a relish for domestic happiness; persons who dwelt in caves or huts learned from missionaries the art of building; they who fed on raw flesh applied to agriculture; men who had been clothed in skins, and were strangers to manufactures, enjoyed the comforts of apparel; and the violent and rapacious renounced their rapine and plunder. The various tribes that inhabited Germany ceased to sacrifice men after the introduction of Christianity; nor did the Huns continue to be strangers to the difference of right and wrong, after they embraced it. The Geloni, and other Scythian tribes, ceased to use the skins of their enemies for clothes; and the Heruli (who latterly over-ran and devastated the western empire) no longer put to death the aged and infirm, as they had formerly done, nor required widows to kill themselves at the tombs of their husbands. The aboriginal inhabitants of Ireland, and the Attacotti (a valiant Caledonian tribe), relinquished cannibalism, and the Hungarians ceased to devour the hearts of their captives, after their conversion. After the conversion also of the Scandinavian nations, they ceased to commit suicide on principle; nor did their wives and slaves voluntarily devote themselves to death, in order to honour the deceased in the paradise of Odin. Christianity imparted to the Danes, Norwegians, and Russians, just ideas of property; and put an end to their piratical expeditions and depredations. The northern kingdoms, which were engaged in incessant wars, while their inhabitants were heathens, became more pacific after the preaching of the Gospel among them. The Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians, who could only speak a barbarous language, acquired the use of letters; a people who were continually making depredations on their neighbours, became content with their own territories; and nations, almost inaccessible on account of their cruelty and superstition, became gentle and sociable in consequence of their conversion. The well-informed lawyer must respect Christianity for the numerous benevolent laws to which it gave rise; and every man who has read (however slightly) the laws of the emperors Theodosius, Justinian, and Charlemagne, or the codes of the Visigoths, Lombards, Anglo-Saxons, and other barbarous nations, must venerate Christianity as the source of many just and merciful laws, which were totally unknown to polished as well as to civilised pagans.

Perhaps no country more greatly needed the light of Christianity, or has been more eminently benefited by it, than England. Druidism, uniformly more sanguinary than other cruel modifications of paganism (though in some respects less erroneous), was succeeded first by the impure mythology of Rome, and then by the sanguinary and war-inspiring worship of the deities of the northern hordes, by whom it was invaded from time to time, and finally subdued. Never was Christianity attended with circumstances more pleasing, or with changes more salutary, than among our rude and ferocious forefathers. The preaching of the Gospel, from the very earliest time

of the Christian æra, abolished human sacrifices (principally wretched captives), that were offered by the Druids: the rude and unsettled Saxons, when converted to Christianity, acquired a relish for the comforts of civilised life, and ceased to immolate their captives, or the cowardly members of their own army. And the descendants of those barbarous savages, who prohibited commercial intercourse with strangers, and who thus cruelly put their prisoners to death, now feed and clothe them, and encourage intercourse with all the nations of the earth. It was the spirit of Christianity, that, in England, put a stop to the dreadful animosities of the barons; that checked the perpetual feuds of the darker ages; that subdued the pride and fierceness which so convulsed the government of our own and other nations; that gave rise to the singular but beneficial institution of chivalry, which tempered the valour of its professors, by uniting in the same persons the various and useful virtues of courtesy, humanity, honour, and justice; and, finally, has diffused that spirit of practical piety, benevolence, and morality, which have justly rendered Britain the glory of all lands.

Such were the happy changes wrought by Christianity on the state of society in ancient times; nor has it been less useful among modern pagans, so far as its pure and life-giving precepts have been propagated and inculcated among them. Indeed, on whatever part of the field of missionary exertions we fix our attention, we have the most satisfactory evidence of the mighty efficacy of the Gospel as the means of improving the present condition of mankind. Thus, in North America, in South America also, and in the East Indies, wherever Christianity has been carried, it has abolished human sacrifices, and all the barbarous practices mentioned in the former part of this work[1]; and has diffused the blessings of civilisation, together with the glad tidings of salvation.[2] In the West Indies it has mitigated the horrors of slavery, and converted stubborn captives (barbarously and unjustly torn from their native soil) into valuable ser-

[1] See pp. 17, 18. suprà.

[2] Some writers have imagined that certain detestable practices of the pagans were abolished by civilisation, and not by the Christian religion. But the falsehood of this opinion will appear, by considering, that bloody and obscene customs prevailed among the Egyptians, Carthaginians, Greeks, and Romans, who were, in many respects, equal to us in literature and civilisation, and yet performed several hideous rites long after they had arrived at the pinnacle of refinement. Polished heathens offered human victims to their gods, and were, on particular occasions, guilty of every abomination imputed to the uncivilised, except devouring their children. In all rude nations which embraced the Gospel, Christianity and civilisation were as cause and effect, so that the benefits of the latter are to be ascribed to the former. As the Gospel softened and civilised barbarians, we may fairly attribute to it the happy effects of civilisation. The Prussians and Lithuanians having offered human sacrifices, and continued uncivilised till their conversion in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it is probable they would have done so to this day, were it not for Christianity, since the Mingrelians, Circassians, and other heathens, are still more rude than Christian nations under nearly the same circumstances of latitude and soil. The Chinese and Japanese, though polished nations, and well acquainted with arts and manufactures, it is well known, publicly commit crimes which would not be tolerated in the rudest Christian kingdom. Upon the whole, it appears that Christianity has exploded several crimes of the civilised as well as barbarous heathen, has taught each of them virtues to which he was a stranger, and must, wherever it is established, prevent relapses to paganism, and the numerous evils resulting from false systems of religion.— Dr Ryan's History of Religion, pp. 277, 278.

vants; so that a *real* Christian slave, it is well known, was *of greater value* than one who is a pagan, and finally, slavery itself has been annihilated.

Further, in Greenland, among a people who, in addition to all the privations which they endure from the severity of the climate, had been left in the lowest stages of savage life, the Moravians or United Brethren have been instrumental in introducing the comforts and endearments of civilisation; and those outcasts of society may now be seen enjoying the food and shelter which their industry and perseverance had secured for them. With the admission of the doctrines of Christ, they have relinquished their ferocious habits; they resumed the exercise of reason when they began to practise the duties of religion; and instead of exhibiting the miseries of their former condition, we behold the edifying spectacle of men raising their adorations to him who created and redeemed them, and *walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.* In South Africa, through the divine blessing on the labours of the same missionaries, and those of other societies, among a race equally removed from the habits of civilisation,—and, perhaps, still more hostile to the application of any means of improvement,—Christianity has made a powerful impression; and has accomplished a change, which has raised those who were placed at the extreme point of human nature to the possession of piety, decency, and happiness. Similar effects have been produced on the western coast of Africa, through the instrumentality of the Church Missionary Society; and the same effects are uniformly seen to follow its progress.[1]

In short, in proportion as Christianity advances into the regions of paganism, we may confidently anticipate a melioration in the general condition of mankind, and a greater equality in the moral and political advantages of every tribe and peaple. The beneficial effects of the Gospel, indeed, are felt even in Mohammedan countries; for all the best moral precepts of the Koran are taken, without acknowledgement, from the Scriptures. Where it agrees with them, it tends to advance human happiness; where it differs from them, it is generally a rhapsody of falsehoods, contradictions, and absurd fables, that will not bear the test of examination.

As, however, *recent* FACTS most powerfully arrest attention, we shall adduce one instance more of the glorious triumph of Christianity over paganism, which has been achieved *in our own time,* since the commencement of the present century, in the numerous clusters of islands in the southern Pacific Ocean, now collectively termed

[1] The details on which the above statements are founded, may be seen in Crantz's History of Greenland, 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1820; Latrobe's Journal of his Visit to South Africa in 1815 and 1816, 4to. London, 1818; and in the later Reports of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; of the Church Missionary Society; of the Society for Missions established by the Unitas Fratrum or Moravians; of the London Missionary Society; of the Baptist Missions in the East Indies; and of the Wesleyan Missionary Society.—Abstracts of the most recent of these reports of Christian benevolence (comprising also much important geographical information) may be seen in the periodical journal entitled "The Missionary Register."

Polynesia, through the divine blessing on the unwearied labours of devoted missionaries; who have persevered in their arduous undertaking, under discouragements the most protracted and depressing, and with a patient endurance of privations not easily comprehended by those who have always remained at home, or who have visited only civilised portions of foreign climes. In common with missionaries in other parts of the world, they have been described by the enemies of religion, as ignorant and dogmatical fanatics; more intent on the inculcation of the peculiarities of their sect or party, than in promoting the well-being of the people; holding out no inducement by precept or example to industrious habits, &c.: but the PRESENT STATE of the islands in which they spent so many years, compared with what it was previously to and at the time of their arrival (as recorded in the voyages of various navigators), and during several subsequent years, presents a sufficient and triumphant refutation of every charge of this kind. Within a circle of many hundred miles, which is studded with clusters of numerous and populous islands, and of which Tahiti (formerly called Otaheite) is the centre, many thousands of *adult* inhabitants, together with their chieftains, have voluntarily embraced, and made an open profession of, the Christian faith, without the intervention or influence of any Christian Potentate or State; and the consequences of this propagation of the Gospel among them have been, the abolition of theft, polygamy, and infanticide, of human sacrifices, and of the murder of prisoners taken in war, and the extinction of cannibalism. Idolatry, with all its sanguinary rites, has been annihilated; and education, industry, and civilisation have been rapidly diffused, and are daily extending their benevolent influences. Christian congregations have been formed; and from them the life-giving truths of the Gospel have been carried to the surrounding regions. Among savages, who a few years since were but little removed from the most barbarous state of nature, the use of letters and written languages has been introduced. Instead of a rude administration of justice, founded on the arbitrary will of the chieftains, a system of equitable laws and courts of justice, and representative governments, have been established on the basis of Christian Principles, with the voluntary consent of sovereigns, inferior chieftains, and people. The useful arts, with many of the conveniencies of life, have been introduced; printing presses have been established, and the Holy Scriptures have been translated and printed, besides multitudes of elementary and useful books; the rudiments of navies have been formed, and piers constructed; roads have been made, and beautiful churches for divine worship have been erected. In short, religious, moral, and social order are rapidly extending; and the inhabitants of the Southern Archipelago are rising in the scale of nations. All these are the fruits of the divine blessing upon unwearied missionary labours[1], and they have followed the intro-

[1] The missionaries, who have been the honoured instruments in accomplishing the great work above described, have been those who were sent out by the London Missionary and Church Missionary Societies, the North American and the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries; and the details of evidence, on which the facts stated in the text are founded,

duction of the Gospel; for civilisation, with all its attendant advantages, INEVITABLY follows the diffusion of Christian Principles and Christian Precepts. Wherever the truth is received in love (and multitudes have so received it), that truth has made them free in the noblest and most enlarged sense of the word. Men who were devoted to intemperance, ferocious, faithless, profligate, and ungodly, have been so changed in their hearts and lives, as to become virtuous, peaceable, and useful members of society; and many thousands of adult persons (besides their children) who, a few years since, were enveloped in error, sensuality, and idolatry, have been turned from dumb idols to serve the living and true God. Public, social, and domestic worship are universal. Who can contemplate the former condition of these islands, with their inhabitants groaning and consuming under the tyranny of a cruel system of idolatry, and of vices still more destructive,—and then contrast with it the natives in their present circumstances, gradually emerging from their former darkness and misery under the benign influences of Christianity; worshipping the true God, becoming honourable members of the Christian church, reading the Holy Scriptures (for a written language has been given to them), advancing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, improving in their mental and moral character, and in their social habits, with the comforts of civilised life daily multiplying around them,—where is the Christian who can contemplate these things, and not evidently perceive the finger of Divine Providence,—a most convincing proof of the efficacy of the Gospel, and a most powerful incentive as well as encouragement to further missionary exertions?

VI. Such are the effects which Christianity is actually producing in our own times. Contrast them with the effects of that atheistical philosophy, which towards the close of the eighteenth century plunged France in desolation, misery, and anarchy almost indescribable, and then judge of the want of candour and truth, in a modern opposer of Christianity, who, with such facts before him, could assert that the Christian religion is "a pestilence more destructive of life, happiness, and peace, than all other pestilences combined."

It is, however, in the private walks of life, especially, that the efficacy of the Christian system has been practically felt in reclaiming the profane and immoral to sobriety, equity, truth, and piety, and to an exemplary behaviour in relative life. Having been *made free from sin, and become the servants of God, they have their fruit unto holiness,* and, after patiently continuing in well-doing, and cheerfully bearing various afflictions (supported by the precious promises of the Bible), they joyfully meet death; being cheered by the hope of *eternal life, as the gift of God through Jesus Christ:* while they who are best acquainted with the Gospel are most convinced that they have been rendered wiser, more holy, as well as more happy, by believing it;

may be seen in the Narrative of the Mission to Otaheite, published by the Directors of the London Missionary Society, and also in their reports from the year 1819 to the present time; in the Missionary Register; in Mr. Stewart's Narrative of his Residence in the Sandwich Islands; and especially in Mr. Ellis's Polynesian Researches, in two volumes, 8vo.; in Mr. Williams's Narrative of Missionary Enterprise to the South Sea Islands; and in Mr. Pritchard's Missionary Encouragement. London, 1845. 8vo.

and that there is a reality in religion, though various conflicting interests and passions may keep them from duly embracing it. "There are indeed *enthusiasts* also, but they become such by forsaking the old rule of faith and duty for some new fancy; and there are *hypocrites*, but they attest the reality and excellency of religion by deeming it worth their while to counterfeit it."[1]

It is the peculiar glory of the Christian revelation that it is adapted to every rank and station in life. Is the Christian favoured with temporal blessings? He is instructed how to enjoy them aright, and to distribute to the necessities of those who are in want. Are his circumstances contracted? It preserves him from repining. *He hath learned in whatsoever state he is, therewith to be content. He knows both how to be abased, and how to abound; — every where, and in all things, he is instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, — both to abound and to suffer need.* Nor does the Gospel only produce contentment, but it gives to its possessor a certain dignity and authority, which the greatest can never acquire without it. The rods and axes of despots may extort an outward reverence, but nothing commands the hearts and affections of men like real piety and goodness. *Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* (1 Tim. iv. 8.) A *conscientious* discharge of the duties of religion conciliates the love and esteem of mankind, and establishes a fair character and unblemished reputation. While the *real* Christian fears God and honours the king, he is honest in his dealings, frugal in his expences, and industrious in the proper calling of his life; and aims to *adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things.* Real Christians, whatever be their rank in life, have a peculiar enjoyment in the possession of temporal goods (whether they be few or many), while the ungodly find emptiness in all their possessions; for the mind, rendered happy by the holy and excellent principles that govern it, mixes its own sweetness with whatever good is received, and imparts an extraordinary relish to it; while the unholy dispositions of those who are not in a Christian state of mind, must, by their very nature, prevent such persons from enjoying what they possess.

But the happy effects of Christianity are not confined to prosperity; its sincere professors have also peculiar consolations in the day of adversity. The experience of every day proves that *man is born to trouble;* and religion will not prevent the Christian from being made to feel what it is to share in the common lot of mankind. But, what supports will it afford him, when the cup of affliction is put into his hands! supports to which mere men of the world are utter strangers. These are for the most part miserable in their affliction. If they be kept from murmuring, it is the summit of their attainments, while Christians are enabled to glory even in tribulation, and cordially to approve all the divine dispensations towards them. They truly possess a *peace that passeth all understanding. Being justified by faith, they have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,* and they also

[1] Scott's Commentary on the Bible, vol. i. pref. p. 16.

have the testimony of a good conscience, that, in simplicity and godly sincerity, by the grace of God, they have had their conversation in the world. This is to them a source of unspeakable joy, with which a *stranger* intermeddleth not. "What trouble, indeed, can overwhelm, what fear can discompose, that man who loveth Christ, and keepeth his words? What earthly power can make such a man unhappy? Will you take away his riches? His treasure is in heaven. Will you banish him from home? His country is above. Will you bind him in chains? His conscience, his spirit, his affections, are all free. Will you destroy his body? His body shall be raised incorruptible at the last day, and his soul will immediately return unto God, who gave it. Heaven itself is but an emblem of his happiness. As heaven is enlightened by the rising sun, his soul is illuminated by that sun of righteousness, which ariseth, without setting, in his heart. As heaven is intrinsically bright and beautiful, though clouds obscure and midnight darkness surround it, he is peaceful, happy, and serene, in the midst of trials and afflictions. As heaven is exalted above the storms and tempests of this lower atmosphere, he is elevated above the distractions and perturbations of this troublesome world. He is a Christian. His conversation is in heaven. His life is hid, with Christ, in God.

"We admit, then, that such a Christian has his sorrows. But his sorrow is sweeter than this world's joy. Every trial, every affliction, draws him nearer to his God. In the secrecy of his chamber, in the silence of midnight, he has a resource which the world knows not of. He pours forth his fears, his apprehensions, his griefs, into the bosom of his Maker. Suffering thus becomes a well-spring of delight; for it is felt to be a source of spiritual improvement. Thus it is, that all things work together, not only for good, but for enjoyment, to them that love their God. Thus it is, that if they sow in tears, they also reap in joy."[1] Far different from this is the joy of the hypocrite or of the ungodly. His joy is a malignant passion, excited by the temporary success of some of his devices. *Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom;* but the *triumphing of the wicked is short; and the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment; God is not in all their thoughts. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not thee nor the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? What profit should we have if we pray to him?*[2]

But it is in the prospect of *futurity,* especially, that the happy effects of Christianity are peculiarly felt and displayed. The hour of death must, unavoidably, arrive to every individual of the human race. In that awful moment, when the soul is hovering on the confines of two worlds, suffering the agony of bodily torture, and the remorse of an accusing conscience, something is surely needed to cheer the mind. Where, in all the past, do we discover a single instance of cheerful resignation and hope in a dying infidel? In that exigency, the only consolation afforded by infidelity is, "that there is no hereafter." When friends and relatives are expressing by their agonised looks

[1] Bp. Jebb's Sermons, p. 86.
[2] Prov. xv. 21.; Job xx. 5.; Psal. x. 4.; Job. xxi. 14, 15.

what they are afraid to utter; when medicines and pains are racking the debilitated frame; when the slumbers of conscience are for ever broken, and its awful voice raised: — all — all that unbelief can present to sustain the mind in this trying hour is — the cold and the comfortless doctrine of an ETERNAL SLEEP.

That these sentiments are unequal at such a period to support the mind, is evident from the death-beds of the most eminent of their advocates.[1] Whilst a Paul, a Peter, and a John, and the whole host of Christian martyrs, could survey, unmoved, death in its most terrific forms; while many have vehemently longed for its approach, desiring *to depart and be with Christ;* while some have exulted in the midst of the most excruciating bodily tortures; — Voltaire endured horrors never to be expressed. His associates have attempted to conceal the fact; but the evidence is too strong to be refuted. Like Herod, who was smitten by an angel whilst receiving undue homage from men; so, immediately after his return from the theatre in which he had been inhaling the incense of adulation from a silly populace, he felt that the stroke of death had arrested him. Immediately his friends crowded around him, and his brethren of the Illuminati exhorted him to die like a hero. In spite of their admonitions, he sent for the *curé* of St. Gervais; and, after confession, signed in the presence of the abbé Mignot (his nephew), and of the marquis de Villevielle (one of the Illuminati), his recantation of his former principles. After this visit, the *curé* was no more allowed to see him. His former friends, having obtained possession of his house, interdicted all access unto him. It has, however, crept out by means of the nurse who attended him, that he died in unutterable agony of mind.[2] D'Alembert, Diderot, and about twenty others, who beset his apartment, never approached him without receiving some bitter execration. Often he would curse them, and exclaim, "Retire! It is you who have brought me to my present state! Begone! I could have done without you all; but you could not exist without me. And what a wretched glory you have procured me!"

These reproaches were succeeded by the dreadful recollection of his own part in the conspiracy against religion. He was heard, in anguish and in dread, alternately supplicating or blaspheming that God against whom he had conspired. He would cry out, in plaintive

[1] "Why is it that, of all the facts gathered from the death-bed scenes of infidels, there are none of a pleasing character? Even in the moments of delirium their minds seem filled with images and fancies of a horrible kind; nor is it surprising that such should be the fact, when we reflect that in their sentiments there is nothing to hope, and everything to fear, from death. The thought of annihilation is itself fitted to inspire gloom; and whatever shakes this belief awakens the most fearful forebodings of a judgment to come; so that infidels naturally view with trembling the near approach of death, and have their fears aroused for the consequences." Rowland's Common Maxims of Infidelity, p. 280. New York, 1850.

[2] The same nurse, "being many years afterwards requested to wait on a sick Protestant gentleman, refused, till she was assured he was not a philosopher; declaring, if he were, she would on no account incur the danger of witnessing such a scene as she had been compelled to do at the death of M. Voltaire." Bp. Wilson's (of Calcutta) Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 412. 8vo. edition. Dr. Wilson adds, that he received the account from the *son* of the gentleman to whose dying bed the woman was invited

accents, Oh, Christ! Oh, Jesus Christ! and then complain that he was abandoned by God and man. It seemed as if the hand, which had traced of old the sentence of an impious king, now traced before his eyes his own blasphemies. In vain he turned away from the contemplation of them. The time was coming apace, when he was to appear before the tribunal of him whom he had blasphemed; and his physicians, particularly Dr. Tronchin, calling in to administer relief, thunderstruck, retired. His associates would, no doubt, willingly have suppressed these facts; but it was in vain. The mareschal de Richelieu fled from his bed-side, declaring it to be a sight too terrible to be endured[1]; and Dr. Tronchin[2] compared the horrors of Voltaire's dying moments to those inflicted by the furies on Orestes. The

[1] The reader will find a full account of this transaction, and of the horrid death of Voltaire, in the abbé Barruel's History of Jacobinism, vol. i. ch. 17. pp. 377—380. This account was confirmed by M. de Luc, a philosopher of distinguished science, and of the greatest honour and probity.

[2] The account of Voltaire's last hours, published by M. Barruel, has at length received a signal confirmation, by the publication (for the first time) of a letter from Dr. Tronchin himself to the eminent Christian philosopher, M. Bonnet, of Geneva, in pp. 272—274. of Ch. Eynard's "Essai sur la Vie de Tissot," Lausanne, 1839, 8vo.; from which the following paragraphs have been translated.

"He" [Voltaire, says Dr. Tronchin,] "imagined that I would not see him; and this idea tormented him. In haste he wrote me a letter perfumed with incense, in which he swears eternal esteem and regard to me. I visited him. 'You have been,' he said to me, 'my saviour, be here my tutelar angel. I have but one breath of life left, I come to yield it up in your arms.' He probably spoke the truth; they will kill him.

"If my principles, my dear friend, had required to be strengthened by any tie, the man whom I have seen become weak, agonise, and die before my eyes, would have secured them by a gordian knot; and on comparing the death of a good man, which is but the end of a fine day, with that of Voltaire, I should have seen the difference which exists between a fine day and a tempest; between the serenity of the soul of the wise man who ceases to live, and the dreadful torment of him to whom death is the king of terrors. I thank God I did not need this spectacle; and yet *fortè olim meminisse juvabit.* This man then was predestined to die under my hands. I always told him the truth; and, unhappily for him, I am the only person who never deceived him. 'Yes, my friend,' he often said to me, 'you alone gave me good advice. If I had followed it, I should not be in the dreadful state in which I am. I should have returned to Ferney; I should not have become intoxicated with the incense which has turned my head. Yes! I have followed nothing but smoke: you can do me no more good. Send me the physician for madmen. What fatality brought me to Paris? You told me when I arrived, that an oak of eighty years old does not bear transplanting; and you spoke the truth. Why did I not believe you? And when I had given you my word that I would set out in the invalid carriage which you had promised me, why did I not go? Pity me! I am mad.'

"He was to set out two days after the follies of his coronation at the theatre" [at Paris]; "but the next morning he received a deputation from the French Academy, which intreated him to honour it with his presence before his departure. He attended in the afternoon, and was made president of the society by acclamation. He accepted the office, which is for three months. He thus chained himself for three months, and of his promise given to me nothing remained. From this moment to his death, his days were only a gust of madness. He was ashamed of it. When he saw me, he asked my pardon. He pressed my hands; he intreated me to have pity on him, and not to abandon him; especially as he must use new efforts to make a suitable return for the honour the Academy had done him, and induce it to labour at a new dictionary like that of the *Della Crusca.* The compilation of this dictionary was his last dominant idea, his last passion. He had undertaken the letter A; and he had distributed the twenty-three other letters to twenty-three academicians, many of whom greatly irritated him by undertaking the task with an ill grace. 'They are idle fellows,' said he, 'accustomed to live in idleness; but I will make them advance.' And it was to make them advance, that, in the interval of the two sittings, he took — at his peril — so many drugs, and committed so many follies; which hastened his death, and which threw him into a state of despair and the most frightful madness. I cannot recollect it without horror. As soon as he perceived that all

last hours of D'Alembert were like those of Voltaire.[1] Condorcet boasts, that he refused admission to the *curé* on his second visit. Such a refusal evidently shows that he feared what an interview would disclose. Hume, instead of meeting death with the calmness of a philosopher, played the buffoon in that awful hour, proving, by his comic actions, his anxiety to drown serious thought. Diderot and Gibbon discovered the same anxiety, by deeply interesting themselves in the most trifling amusements. The last hours of Paine were such as might have been expected from his previous immoral and unprincipled habits. Though, in reply to the inquiry of his medical attendant whether he believed or wished to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, he declared that he "had no wish to believe on that subject;" yet, during the paroxysms of his distress and pain, he would invoke the name of that Saviour whom he had blasphemed by his writings, in a tone of voice that would alarm the house: and at length he expired, undeplored and detested by his adopted countrymen.[2] A conduct like this proves that there was one spark of horror in the souls of these antagonists of revelation which all their philosophic efforts were unequal to extinguish.

The whole of the atheist's creed, with respect to the future world, is comprised in the following summary; that his body, begun by chance or necessity, is continued without design, and perishes without hope; that his soul is a mere attribute of his body, useless and worthless while he lives, and destined at his death to rottenness and corruption; and that, the sooner it is returned to its parent mould the better. And, by his mandate, he consigns mankind to the dark and desolate regions of annihilation. By this sweeping sentence, which he passes on all the human race, he takes away from himself and his fellow-men, every motive, furnished by the fear of future punishment or by the hope of future rewards, to virtuous, upright, or amiable conduct.[3]

On the other hand, how glorious are the Christian's views of the future world. From the promise of his Creator, he learns that his *body, sown* here *in corruption, weakness, and dishonour, shall be raised,*

his efforts to increase his bodily strength had produced a contrary effect, death was continually before his eyes. From that moment rage took possession of his soul. Remember the furies of Orestes. [Rappellez vous les fureurs d'Oreste.] *Furiis agitatus obiit:*" [i. e.] *He,* Voltaire, *died, tormented by the Furies.*

In order to explain this allusion of Dr. Tronchin, the author may perhaps be permitted to state, that "the Furies of Orestes" was a proverbial expression, among the ancient Greeks and Romans, for the most frightful horrors of mind. According to the Greek poets and mythologers, Orestes was for many years tormented by the vengeful goddesses whom they termed "the Furies," for having been guilty of parricide in murdering his mother and her paramour Ægisthus, who had previously assassinated his father Agamemnon.

[1] Barruel's History, vol. i. pp. 381, 382.

[2] See Cheetham's Life of Paine, pp. 153—160. (8vo. London, 1818,) which is reprinted from the American publication. What must have been the agony of that man's mind, who could exclaim as Paine did on one occasion,—"*I think,* I *can say what* they *make Jesus Christ to say,*—'*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*'" Ibid. p. 157.

[3] For an able comparison of the principal features of the Atheistical Philosophy with Christianity, the reader is referred to Dr. Godwin's "Philosophy of Atheism examined." Lectures xii. and xiii. London, 1853. 8vo.

beyond the grave, in *incorruption, power, and glory*, with so many attributes of mind or *spirit*, as to be denominated by Him who made it a *spiritual body*. Ever young, active, and undecaying, it shall be re-united to the immortal mind, purified from every stain and every error. This perfect man shall be admitted, with an open and *abundant entrance*, into the heaven of heavens, the peculiar residence of Infinite Majesty, and the chosen seat of infinite dominion. In this noblest of all habitations, this mansion of everlasting joy, he shall be united with an innumerable multitude of companions like himself, sanctified, immortal, and happy. Enrolled among the noblest and best beings in the universe, *a child, a priest, a king* in the house of his Heavenly Father, his endless and only destination will be to know, love, serve, and enjoy God; to interchange the best affections and the best offices with his glorious companions; and to advance in wisdom, virtue, and happiness, . . . FOR EVER.[1]

This is no ideal picture. Hopes and consolations like these have, in every age of Christianity, supported the minds of millions of Christians, in the humble and retired walks of life, as well as in exalted stations. They cheered and animated the minds of such men as the Lord Chief Justice Hale, Pascal, Newton, Boyle, Locke, Addison, Boerhaave, Lord Lyttleton, Baron Haller, Sir William Jones, Beattie, and very many other distinguished laymen (divines are designedly omitted), both British and foreign, who applied their mighty intellects to the investigation and elucidation of the evidences of the Christian records; and whose lives and writings will continue to instruct and edify the world, so long as the art of printing shall perpetuate them.

Such are the effects which the Christian revelation has actually produced on the happiness of nations, as well as of individuals. Philosophy and infidelity (we have seen) are alike inadequate to accomplish them. *An evil tree*, we know, *bringeth not forth good fruit. If*, therefore, *this revelation were not of God it could do nothing.*

SECT. V.

THE PECULIAR ADVANTAGES, POSSESSED BY THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION OVER ALL OTHER RELIGIONS, A DEMONSTRATIVE EVIDENCE OF ITS DIVINE ORIGIN AND AUTHORITY.

ALL the truths stated in the preceding pages will appear still more evident, if we consider the Christian revelation, as is stands opposed to all other religions or pretended revelations. The excellency of the Christian revelation consists in this, that it possesses ADVANTAGES WHICH NO OTHER RELIGIONS OR REVELATIONS HAVE, at the same time that it has none of the defects by which they are characterised.

We affirm, that no other religion or revelation has advantages equal to those of the Christian revelation or religion; for no other

[1] Dwight's System of Theology, p. 55.

can pretend to have been confirmed by ancient prophecies. Even Mohammed thought it better to oblige men to call the Scriptures in question, than to derive any arguments from them, which might serve to confirm his mission. There are indeed several religions which have had their martyrs, but of what description? Superstitious men, who blindly exposed themselves to death, like the ignorant East Indians, thousands of whom prostrate themselves before the idol Juggernauth, and hundreds of whom devote themselves to be crushed by the wheels of the machine that carries the colossal image of their idol. But no religion, besides the Christian, was ever confirmed by the blood of an infinite number of sensible, *understanding* martyrs, who voluntarily suffered death in defence of what they had seen; who from *vicious* and *profligate* persons, became exemplary for the sanctity of their lives, upon the confidence they had in their Master; and who at length, being dispersed throughout the world, by their death gained proselytes; and making their blood the seed of the church, cheerfully suffered martyrdom, having certain assurance of being crowned after their death; a certain assurance which they derived from what they themselves had formerly seen.

We find other religions, which pretend to be confirmed and authorised by several signs and extraordinary events from heaven. Thus, the Romans used to attribute to their religion all the advantages they obtained over other nations; and the Mohammedans pretend that the great successes which God was pleased to give their prophet, were so many certain and undeniable marks of the truth of their religion. But to pretend that temporal prosperity is a certain character of a true religion, or adversity that of a false one, is to suppose that the most profligate wretches, provided they are happy in this world, are the greatest favourites of God. But certainly it is not prosperity or adversity *simply considered,* but prosperity or adversity as *foretold by God or his prophets,* that is a certain character of true religion; and when we affirm that several extraordinary events bear witness to the truth of Christianity, we mean only those events which had been foretold by the prophets; as, for instance, the calling of the Gentiles, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the establishment of the Christian church. Finally, there may be several religions that may deceive, but it is only the Christian religion that can truly satisfy mankind. There are some religious grounded upon fabulous miracles, and confirmed by witnesses easily convicted of imposture; but it is only the Christian religion that is firmly and solidly established upon true miracles and valid testimonies. It appears, then, that no religion in the world has such extraordinary qualifications as the Christian religion; of which it must also be affirmed, that it is free from all such defects as are incident to other religions.

No deep research, no great sagacity or penetration of mind, is necessary to discover this truth; for it is manifest that the Christian religion is not designed for the satisfaction of the carnal and worldly appetites of men, like that of the Jews, who aspired only after temporal prosperity and worldly pomp; nor is it a monstrous medley, like that of the ancient Samaritans, made up of a ridiculous mixture

of the pagan and Jewish religion; nor has it any of the faults or extravagant superstitions of the pagan religion. But as it would extend this chapter (already perhaps too long) to a disproportionate length, were we to oppose it particularly to all the errors of other religions, we shall confine our comparison to showing the advantages possessed by the Christian religion over all the rest, in the following respects:—

I. In its PERFECTION.

Other religions, as being principally of human invention and institution, were formed by degrees from the different imaginations of several persons, who successively made such additions or alterations as they thought convenient. The Greeks, for example, added several things to that religion which they received from the Egyptians; and the Romans to that which they had received from the Greeks. Menander improved upon the senseless impieties of Simon Magus; and Saturninus and Basilides added to those of Menander.[1] And the reason is, because men are never weary of inventing, nor the people of believing, novelties. But it is not so with the Christian religion, which was wholly delivered by Christ, is entirely contained in every one of the Gospels, and even in each of the epistles of the apostles. Whatever alterations men have thought fit to make in the doctrine which Christ brought into the world only corrupted its purity and spirituality, as appears by the great disproportion there is between the apostolical doctrine and the ordinary speculations of men.

II. In its OPENNESS.

Other religions durst not show themselves openly in full light, and therefore were veiled over with a mysterious silence and affected darkness. Some of the Gnostics chose the night to cover the impurity of their abominable mysteries. And the Romans exposed themselves to the satirical raillery of their poets, by being so careful to conceal the worship they paid to their goddess Bona. Julian and Porphyry exerted all their talents, either to set off the ridiculous and offensive ceremonies of paganism, or to palliate their superstition, by several various explanations of it; as when they positively affirmed that they worshipped one only supreme God, though they acknowledged at the same time other subordinate deities, depending one upon another; and when they endeavoured to justify the worship they paid to their idols, by using many subtle and nice distinctions. It is certain that there is a principle of pride in the hearts of men which is the reason why they cannot endure to be accused of entertaining any absurd and extravagant opinions, so that whenever their passions have made them embrace a religion which seems not very reasonable, they employ all their ingenuity to make it at least appear consonant to reason. But the Christian religion requires no veil to cover it, no mysterious silence, no dark dissimulation, or close disguise, although it proposes such kinds of objects to us as are vastly contrary to all our prejudices and received opinions. The apostles freely confess that the preaching of the Gospel is, as it were, an apparent folly; but yet they assure us that God was resolved to save the world by that seeming folly. They knew that the death of Christ became a scandal to the Jew, and a folly to the Greek; yet they publicly declared that they were determined not to know any thing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And how comes it, then, than they did not in the least degree extenuate or endeavour to soften the sense of that seeming paradox (so far were they from concealing it), but were strongly and fully persuaded of the truth of that adorable mystery, and the abundance of their understanding served only to make them more fully comprehend the efficacy of the cross?

III. In its ADAPTATION to every existing State and Constitution, and to the Capacities of all men.

If we were strictly to consider some religions, we should find that they were at first, for the most part, instituted either by poets or philosophers; and that they

[1] See an account of these false teachers of Christianity, in Dr. Lardner's History of Heretics.

generally sprang from the sportive conceits or witty speculations of the understanding; which is the reason why they were not so universally approved. The philosophers always derided the religion of the vulgar; and the vulgar understood nothing of the religion of the philosophers. Socrates ridiculed the religion of the Athenians; and the Athenians accused Socrates of impiety and atheism, and condemned him to death. The Christian religion alone is approved both by the philosophers and also by the vulgar people, as neither depending upon the ignorance of the latter, nor proceeding from the learning of the former. It has a *divine efficacy and agreeable power, suitable to all hearts:* it is adapted to all climates, and to every existing state-constitution, and is suited to all classes of the human intellect, and to every variety of human character.

1. The Christian religion is adapted to harmonise with every existing state-constitution. It has, indeed, nothing immediately to do with political affairs. It fashions every individual, and produces in him that knowledge and those dispositions and feelings, which enable him to live contented in any place, and become a useful citizen under every kind of civil constitution, and a faithful subject of every government. It does not, according to the principles of its Author, erect one state within another, nor does it in any case disturb the public tranquillity (for loyalty and *true* piety are never disunited), nor can the interest of the church ever come in collision with that of the government. On the other hand, that state, whose citizens should *really* be formed agreeably to the principles of Christianity, would unquestionably be the happiest and most flourishing. Its rulers would have the most faithful, obedient, and active subjects; and the state itself would be distinguished for an order, which would need no power or constraint for its preservation. The arts and sciences would flourish there without being abused and made the means of poisoning the morals of the people: life also would there be enjoyed in the most agreeable and tranquil manner, and all property and rights would be perfectly secured. No state would be more firmly connected together, and consequently more terrible and invincible to its enemies.[1]

2. Further, the Christian religion is adapted to every class of the human intellect: it is level to the capacity of the most simple and ignorant, though infinitely raised above the philosophy of the wise: it is sublime without being nicely speculative, and simple without being mean; in its sublimity preserving its clearness, and in its simplicity preserving its dignity. In a word, there is nothing so great nor so inconsiderable in human society, but what may some way fall under its consideration, and it is equally approved of and admired by all. It is, moreover, most wonderfully adapted to those habits and sentiments which spring up in the advancement of knowledge and refinement, and which seem destined to continue for ages, as they have done for the last three centuries, and to spread themselves more and more widely over the human race. Since the introduction of the Christian religion, "human nature has made great progress, and society experienced great changes; and in this advanced condition of the world, Christianity, instead of losing its application and importance, is found to be more and more congenial and adapted to man's nature and wants. Men have outgrown the other institutions of that period when Christianity appeared, its philosophy, its modes of warfare, its policy, its public and private economy; but Christianity has never shrunk as intellect has opened, but has always kept in advance of men's faculties, and unfolded nobler views in proportion as they have ascended. The highest powers and affections which our nature has developed find more than adequate objects in this religion. Christianity is indeed peculiarly fitted to the more improved stages of society, to the more delicate sensibilities of refined minds, and especially to that dissatisfaction with the present state, which always grows with the growth of our moral powers and affections. As men advance in civilisation, they become susceptible of mental sufferings, to which ruder ages are strangers; and these Christianity is fitted to assuage. Imagination and intellect become more restless, and Christianity brings them tranquillity by the eternal and magnificent truths, the solemn and unbounded prospects which it unfolds. This fitness of our religion to more advanced stages of society than that in which it was introduced, to wants of human nature not then developed, seems to me very striking. The religion bears the marks of having come from a Being who perfectly understood the human mind, and had power to provide

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[1] Reinhard's Plan of the Founder of Christianity, pp. 211, 212. New York, 1831.

for its progress. This feature of Christianity is of the nature of prophecy. It was an anticipation of future and distant ages; and when we consider among whom our religion sprung, where, but in God, can we find an explanation of this peculiarity?"[1]

IV. In the Spirituality of its Worship.

Other religions brought men from spiritual objects to those which were corporeal and earthly: the Christian religion brings them from the objects of sense to those of the understanding. We all know that when the heathens deified men or worshipped a deity under a human shape, they were so far from paying to that deity a worship due to a spiritual nature, that their adoration consisted in several games, shows, and divers exercises of the body. The Jews and Samaritans, by their eager disputes whether God was to be worshipped in Jerusalem or on Mount Gerizim, extinguished charity, the true spirit of religion, in their violent defences of the external part of it. Nay, the prophets complained formerly that the Jews made a true fast to consist in bowing down their heads as a bulrush, and putting on sackcloth and ashes.[2] And the Holy Scripture observes, that the priests of Baal were wont to cut themselves with knives and lances, when they sacrificed to him, as if there were no other way to make their god hear their prayers but by inflicting such punishments on their own bodies.[3] The modern Jews cannot be persuaded that we have been called to the knowledge of the true God (though they find we all profess to put our trust and confidence in him), because they perceive not that we use any corporeal ceremonies. And the Mohammedans, more irreligious than superstitious, make their religion and its happiness depend chiefly on their senses. When they worship, they turn themselves towards Mecca, as the Jews turned towards Jerusalem, and earnestly desire of God that he would gratify their senses; and though they have a sort of religious respect for the letters that compose the name of God, and the paper on which it is written, yet they are enjoined to oppress men that bear the image of God, by their religion, which breathes nothing but violence, fury, and oppression.

The reason why men thus usually refer every thing to their senses is, because a worship that is corporeal and sensual is far more easy; it is much easier for a man to take the sun for a God than to be continually occupied in seeking after a God that is invisible; to solemnise games and festivals in honour of a pretended deity than to renounce himself for the sake of a true one: it is much easier for him to fast than to renounce his vices; to sing spiritual songs, or bow to a statue, than forgive his enemies. It appears, then, that the Christian religion bears a more excellent character, as it gives us for the object of our worship, not a God under a human shape, but a God that is a spirit, as it teaches us to honour him, not with a carnal, but with a spiritual worship; and this Christ himself has very elegantly told us in these words: *God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.* (John iv. 24.) Who could fill his mind with such elevated notions? And how comes it that he so excellently sets down in that short precept the genius of true religion, of which men before were wholly ignorant?

V. In its Opposition to the Spirit of the World.

It may be said of all other religions, without exception, that they induce us to look after the pleasures and profits of the world in the worship of God; whereas the Christian religion makes us glorify God by renouncing the world. Thus the heathens, designing rather to please themselves than their deities, introduced into religion whatever could in any way flatter and divert them; and the Mohammedan religion, not being encumbered with many ceremonies, at least affixes temporal advantages to the practice of its worship; as if the pleasures of the world were to be the future reward of religion: but certainly both of them are much mistaken; for the heathens should have known that the worship of God consisted not in diverting and pleasing themselves; and the Mohammedans should not have been ignorant, that since temporal and worldly advantages were insufficient in themselves to satisfy the boundless desires of the human heart, they could not come in competition with those benefits which true religion had peculiarly designed for him. But both these

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[1] Dr. W. E. Channing's Discourse on the Evidences of Revealed Religion, pp. 36. 38. Bristol, 1824. (Reprinted from th American edition.)

[2] Isa. lviii. 5.

[3] 1 Kings xviii. 28.

followed the motions of self-love, which being naturally held in suspense between the world and religion, imagines that nothing can be more pleasant than to unite them both, thinking thereby to reconcile its inclination and duty, consecrate its pleasures, and put no difference between conscience and interest.

But the first rule of true religion teaches us that that mutual agreement is impossible; or, to use its own words, that Christ and Belial are incompatible one with the other; that we must either glorify God at the expense of worldly pleasures, or possess the advantages of the world with the loss of our religion: and this certainly shows the Christian religion to have a divine character.

VI. In its Humiliation of Man and Exaltation of the Deity.

Other false religions debase the Deity and exalt man; whereas the Christian religion *humbles man, and exalts the Deity*. The Egyptians, a nation that boasted so much of their antiquity, made monsters of their deities; and the Romans made deities of their emperors, many of whom were rather monsters than men: the most famous philosophers were not ashamed to rank their deities below themselves, and themselves even before Jupiter. But the Christian religion teaches us that we owe all to God, who owes nothing at all to us. It humbles us by the consideration of that infinite distance which there is between God and us: it shows that we are miserable despicable creatures in comparison of God, who is a Supreme Being, and who alone is worthy of our love and adoration. Who, then, can but admire so excellent a religion?

VII. In its Restoration of Order to the World.

Other religions made us depend upon those beings which were given us to command, and pretend a power over that Supreme Being upon whom we ought only to depend. They taught men to burn incense to the meanest creatures, and impudently to equal themselves to the universal monarch of the world. It is indeed no wonder that men should be so impious as to desire to become gods, since they were so base as to forget that they were men; and yet how ill their pride became them when they disdained not to submit to four-footed beasts, to the fowls of the air, and to the creeping animals and plants of the earth, as St. Paul reproaches them; and how basely superstitious were they, in that they were not content to deify themselves, but would also deify their own vices and imperfections! But the Christian religion alone restores that equitable order which ought to be established in the world, by submitting every thing to the power of man, that he might submit himself to the will of God. And what can be the duty of true religion, but to restore such just and becoming order in the world?

VIII. In its Tendency to eradicate all evil Passions from the Heart.

We need no deep research into other religions to find that they chiefly tend to flatter the corrupt desires of men, and efface those principles of justice and uprightness which God has imprinted on their minds. But he that shall truly consider the Christian religion, will certainly find that it tends to the eradication of those corrupt desires out of our hearts, and restoring those bright characters of honesty and justice imprinted on our minds by the hand of God. The heathens flattered their passions to such a degree as to erect altars in honour of them; and Mohammed was so well pleased with temporal prosperity, that he made it the end and reward of his religion. The Gnostics imagined that when they had arrived at a certain degree of knowledge, which they called a state of perfection, they might commit all sorts of actions without any scruple of conscience; and that sin, which polluted others, would be sanctified in them. But what blindness! what impiety was this! How admirable is the Christian religion, which alone, among all others, shows us our own wickedness and corruption, and heals it with such remedies as are as wholesome to the soul as unpleasing to the body.

IX. In its Contrariety to the covetousness and ambition of mankind.

It is, moreover, worthy of remark, that other religions are contrary to policy, either in favouring or restraining too much human weakness and corruption upon

the account of policy; whereas the Christian religion preserves its rights and privileges inviolable, *independent of either*. The pagan religion was against policy in giving too much to human weakness and corruption. It would have been much better for the good and welfare of the state, if men had framed to themselves a greater idea of the holiness of their gods; because they would have been less licentious, and more submissive to the civil laws: whereas they were encouraged by the example of their deities to violate the most sacred and inviolable rights. Mohammed, desirous to avoid this irregularity, retained the notion of a true God; but then, being willing also to flatter men's inclinations in order to draw them to his side, he confusedly mixed with that idea the carnal and gross notions which the heathens had entertained of paradise, borrowing from Christianity such objects as must necessarily mortify our passions, and assuming those from paganism which serve to flatter our bad inclinations. But the Christian religion keeps no such measures either with policy or corruption. Policy complains that the doctrine of Christ necessarily softens men's courage; and that instead of encouraging them to enlist themselves soldiers for the welfare and preservation of the state, it rather makes them lambs, who can hardly be exasperated against their enemies, whom they must continually pray for, and are obliged to love as themselves. And human frailty and corruption murmurs to see itself impugned by the Christian religion, even in the dispositions and most secret recesses of the soul; and that the veil of hypocrisy, and the pious pretences and dissimulations of the soul under which it ought to lie secure, are ineffectual against it. Who, then, but God, can be the author of a religion so equally contrary both to the covetous desires of the mean, and the ambition of the great, and so equally averse both to policy and corruption?

X. In its Restoration of the Divine Image to Man.

Other religions would have God bear the image of man, and so necessarily represent the Deity as weak, miserable, and infected with all manner of vices, as men are. Whereas the Christian religion teaches us that man ought to bear the image of God; which is a motive to induce us to become perfect, as we conceive God himself to be holy and perfect. That religion, then, which restores to God his glory, and the image of God to man, must necessarily be of divine authority.

XI. In its Mighty Effects.

False religions were the irregular confused productions of the politest and ablest men of those times: whereas the Christian religion is a wonderful composition, which seems wholly to proceed from the most simple and ignorant sort of people; and, at the same time, it is such as evinces that it *must* have for its principle the God of holiness and love. They who *habitually* apply the Christian religion in their tempers and lives, and who imbibe its spirit and hopes, have an evidence of its superiority still more internal than any which has hitherto been mentioned; — an evidence which is to be FELT rather than described, but which is not less real because it is founded on feeling. We refer to that conviction of the divine original of the Christian religion, which springs up and continually gains strength in their hearts. "In such men there is a consciousness of the adaptation of Christianity to their noblest faculties; a consciousness of its exalting and consoling influences, of its power to confer the true happiness of human nature, to give that peace which the world cannot give; which assures them that it is not of earthly origin, but a ray from the everlasting light, a stream from the fountain of heavenly wisdom and love. This is the evidence which sustains the faith of thousands, who never read and cannot understand the learned books of Christian apologists; who want, perhaps, words to explain the ground of their belief, but whose faith is of adamantine firmness; who hold the Gospel with a conviction more intimate and unwavering, than *mere* argument can produce." [1]

And now let us put together all these characters, and ask the opposers of revelation, whether they can be so extravagant as to ascribe to an impostor a religion so perfect in its original, that nothing could ever since be superadded to it, but what necessarily lessens its

[1] Dr. Channing's Discourse on the Evidences of Revealed Religion, p. 44.

perfection; a religion that proposes its mysteries with such authority and boldness; that brings men from sensual objects to spiritual ones; that extirpates corruption; that restores the principles of righteousness and uprightness which were imprinted in our souls; that teaches us to glorify God without any regard to self-love or pleasure; to exalt God and humble ourselves; to submit ourselves to his will, who is above us all, and to raise ourselves above those beings which he has put in subjection under us; a religion that is contrary to policy, and yet more averse to corruption; that astonishes our reason, and yet gives us the peace of a good conscience; and, in a word, is as delightful to the one as it is comfortable to the other?

If the Christian religion, then, has all these qualifications, as it certainly has, we cannot doubt but that it is directly, as to these qualifications, opposite to all other religions. And if it be thus opposite to all other religions, it must necessarily have a principle opposite to them; so that, as all other religions peculiarly belong to the flesh, the Christian wholly appertains to the spirit; and as the former are the products of the corrupt desires and imaginations of men, so the *latter must have for its principle the God of holiness and purity.*[1]

The preceding considerations will derive additional force if we contrast the advantages which infidelity and Christianity respectively afford to those who embrace them.

Let it be supposed, then, that the deist is right, and that Christianity is a delusion; what does the former gain? In what respects has he the advantage? Is the deist *happier* than the Christian? No. — Is he *more useful* in society? No. — Can he meet the sorrows of life with *more fortitude?* No. — Can he look into futurity with *more composure?* No. His highest bliss arises from base lusts; his conscience is his daily tormentor; his social circle is a wilderness overgrown with thorns; his life is perfect madness; and of his death it may be said, that *he dieth as a fool dieth.* But the Christian is happy in himself, or rather in his Saviour; he is *useful* in his day; amid all the tumults and anxieties incident to mortality, he enjoys a peace which the world can neither give nor take away; his mind is supported under all the sorrows and afflictions of life; and, in that awful moment, when the great problem is about to be solved, — of annihilation or eternity,—he looks forward to futurity with holy tranquillity. *At least,* he is as safe in his death as any of the children of men.[2]

On the other hand, let it be supposed that the antagonist of revelation is *wrong,* and that Christianity is TRUE (and TRUE *it will be*

[1] Abbadie's Vindication of the Truth of the Christian Religion, vol. ii. pp. 307—320. But the fullest view of the superiority of the Christian Revelation will be found in the Rev. Jerome Alley's "Vindiciæ Christianæ: a Comparative Estimate of the Genius and Temper of the Greek, the Roman, the Hindu, the Mahometan, and the Christian Religions" (London, 1826, 8vo.);—a work written with equal elegance, accuracy, and research

[2] On the subject of the preceding paragraph, the reader will find several admirable and eloquent observations in Dr. Dwight's Two Discourses on the Nature and Danger of Infidel Philosophy, pp. 69—98.

found), what advantage has the Christian more than the infidel — the believer than the unbeliever? or what does it profit us to be Christ's peculiar people? Much every way. For if our happiness in a future state, as is highly probable, shall increase in proportion to what we know, believe, and practise of our duty, upon a principle of obedience to the will of God, in the present life; the consequence is indisputable, that the more we know, believe, and practise of our duty here, so much the more pure and exalted will be our joys in the eternal mansions of bliss hereafter. This, then, is the Christian's boasting, and this our serious triumph, that the Holy Scriptures have made us fully acquainted with all the various relations in which we stand to the Divine Nature, as our Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and constant assistant in our progress towards perfection; that our whole duty is laid open to our view, and that we never can be ignorant of what is the good and acceptable will of our Sovereign Lord; that we have the strongest motives of gratitude and interest to animate us to live up to the law of our being; and that we are filled with the comfortable assurance that our merciful God and Father will receive our sincere though imperfect endeavours to serve and please him, in and through the death and mediation of his Son Jesus Christ. *The best Christian must be the best, and, consequently, upon the whole, will be the happiest man.* Let it not, therefore, be imagined, as is too often the case, that God arbitrarily assigns to Christians a higher degree of happiness than to others, without having a proper regard to their moral agency, and that this is the doctrine of the Gospel. On the contrary, the faith of sincere Christians is always directed to the right and best object, their piety is of the noblest kind, and their virtues the most pure and extensive: to be uniformly engaged in an upright, benevolent, and religious course of action is the solemn vow and profession of Christians. In a word, the deist, by wilfully rejecting all moral evidence, *forfeits all things*, and *gains nothing;* while THE CHRISTIAN HAZARDS NOTHING, AND GAINS ALL THINGS.

SECT. VI.

INABILITY TO ANSWER ALL OBJECTIONS NO JUST CAUSE FOR REJECTING THE SCRIPTURES. — UNBELIEVERS IN DIVINE REVELATION MORE CREDULOUS THAN CHRISTIANS.[1]

ALL the objections which can with any colour or pretence be alleged against the Scriptures have at different times been considered and answered by men of great learning and judgment, the result of whose inquiries we have attempted to concentrate in the present volume; and several objections, particularly those relative to the Mosaic history of the creation and of the deluge, have been demonstrated to be groundless and frivolous. But even though all the diffi-

[1] For the materials of this section, the author is indebted to Dr. Jenkin's Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion, vol. ii. pp 548—554.; to Dr. Ryan's Evidences of the Mosaic and Christian Codes, pp. 293—296.; and to Dr. Samuel Clarke's Discourse on the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion, &c. Proposition xv. (Boyle's Lectures, vol. ii. pp. 192—196. folio. edit.)

culties that are alleged to exist in the Sacred Writings could not be accounted for, yet this would be no just or sufficient cause why we should reject the Scriptures: because objections for the most part are impertinent to the purpose for which they were designed, and do not at all affect the *evidence* which is brought in proof of the Scriptures; and if they were pertinent, yet unless they could confute that evidence, they ought not to determine us against them.

He that, with an honest and sincere desire to find out the truth or falsehood of a revelation, inquires into it, should first consider impartially what can be alleged for it, and afterwards consider the objections raised against it, that so he may compare the arguments in proof of it and the objections together, and determine himself on that side which appears to have most reason for it. But to insist upon particular objections, collected out of difficult places of Scripture, without attending to the main grounds and motives which induce a belief of the truth of the Scriptures, is a very fallacious mode of arguing; because it is not in the least improbable that there may be a true revelation which may have great difficulties in it. But if sufficient evidence be produced to convince us that the Scriptures are indeed the word of God, and there be no proof on the contrary to invalidate that evidence, then all the objections besides that can be raised, are but objections, and *no more!*[1] For if those arguments, by which our religion appears to be true, remain still in their full force, notwithstanding the objections, and if no positive and direct proof be brought that they are insufficient, we ought not to reject those arguments and the conclusions deduced from them on account of the objections, but to reject the objections for the sake of those arguments; because, if those cannot be disproved, all the objections which can be conceived must proceed from some mistake. For when a person is once assured of the truth of a thing by direct and positive proof, he has the same assurance that all objections against it must be vain and false which he has that such a thing is true; because every thing must be false which is opposite to truth, and nothing but that which takes off the arguments, by which anything is proved to be true, can ever prove it false; but all objections must be false themselves or irrelevant to the purpose for which they are alleged, if the evidence for the truth of that against which they are brought cannot be disproved, that is, if the thing against which they are brought be true.

To illustrate these observations by a few examples: — If a man produce never so many inconsistencies, as he thinks, in the Scriptures, yet unless he be as well assured, at least, that these which he calls inconsistencies cannot be in any book of divine revelation, as he may be that the Scriptures are of divine revelation, he cannot in reason reject their authority. And to be assured of this, it must be considered what is inconsistent with the evidence whereby the authority of the Scriptures is proved to us; for whatever is not inconsistent with this evidence cannot be inconsistent with their authority. In like manner, if a man should frame never so many objections against

[1] On this subject the reader will find some admirable observations in Dr. Watt's Caveat against Infidelity, Section 5. Advice xi. Works, vol. iv. p. 105. London, 1810. 4to.

the opinion commonly received, that Cæsar himself wrote the Commentaries which pass under his name, and not Julius Celsus or any other author; unless he can overthrow the evidence by which Cæsar appears to be the author of them, all his objections will never amount to a proof that he was not the author. If Archimedes or Euclid had used improper language or solecisms, would their demonstrations have had the less weight with those by whom they had been understood? Or if they had subjoined an historical account of the discovery and progress of the mathematics, and had made mistakes in the historical part, would the demonstrative part have been the less demonstrative? And does not that man make himself ridiculous who, with Epicurus and Hobbes, pretends by reason to overthrow mathematical axioms and theorems which he cannot understand? Upon the same grounds, if the substance of what the sacred writers deliver be true, it will nevertheless be truth, though the expression were not always proper, and the circumstances of time and place in things less material had been mistaken, and many things should be written which are hard to be understood.

It is very possible for God to reveal things which we may not be able to comprehend; and to enact laws, especially concerning the rites and ceremonies enjoined to a people so many ages past, the reasons of which we may not be able fully to understand; and it is very possible likewise that there may be great difficulties in chronology, and that the text may in divers places have a different reading; and though all these things have been cleared to the satisfaction of reasonable men by several expositors, yet let us suppose at present, to gratify these objectors (and this will gratify them, if any thing can do it), that the laws are utterly unaccountable, that the difficulties in chronology are no way to be adjusted, that the various readings are by no means to be reconciled; yet what does all this prove? That Moses wrought no miracles? That the children of Israel and the Egyptians were not witnesses to them? That what the prophets foretold did not come to pass? That our Saviour never rose from the dead, and that the Holy Spirit did not descend upon the apostles? Or that any thing is contained in the Scriptures repugnant to the divine attributes, or to the natural notions of good and evil? Does it prove any thing of all this? Or can it be pretended to prove it? If it cannot (and nothing is more plain than that it cannot), then all the evidence produced in proof of the authority of the Scriptures stands firm notwithstanding all that either has been or can be said concerning the obscurity, and inconsistency, and uncertainty of the text of the Scriptures. And the next inquiry naturally will be, not how the Scriptures can be from God, if these things be to be found in them (for it is already proved that they are from God, and therefore they must from henceforth be taken for granted, till it can be disproved), but the only inquiry will be, how these passages are to be explained or reconciled with other places.

For let us consider this way of reasoning, which is made use of to disprove the truth and authority of the Scriptures in other things, and try whether we are wont to reason thus in any case but that of reli-

gion, and whether we should not be ashamed of this way of arguing in any other case. How little is it that we thoroughly understand in natural things, and yet how seldom do we doubt of the truth and reality of them because we may puzzle and perplex ourselves in the explication of them? For instance, we discern the light and feel the warmth and heat of the sun, and have the experience of the constant returns of day and night, and of the several seasons of the year; and no man doubts but that all this is effected by the approach or withdrawing of the sun's influence: but whoever will go about to explain all this, and to give a particular account of it, will find it a very hard task; and such objections have been urged against every hypothesis in some point or other, as perhaps no man is able fully to answer. But does any man doubt, whether there be such a thing as light and heat, as day and night, though he cannot be satisfied whether the sun or the earth move? Or do men doubt whether they can see or not, till they can demonstrate how vision is made? And must none be allowed to see but mathematicians? Or do men refuse to eat till they are satisfied how and after what manner they are nourished? Yet, if we must be swayed by objections, which do not come up to the main point nor affect the truth and reality of things, but only fill our minds with scruples and difficulties about them, we must believe nothing which we do not fully comprehend in every part and circumstance of it. For whatever we are ignorant of concerning it, that may, it seems, be objected against the thing itself, and may be a just reason why we should doubt of it. We must take care that we be not too confident that we move, before we can give an exact account of the cause and laws of motion, which the greatest philosophers have not been able to do; we must not presume to eat till we can tell how digestion and nourishment are carried on. In short, this would lead us into all the extravagances of scepticism; for upon these principles it was that some have doubted whether snow be white, or honey sweet, or any thing else be of the same colour or taste of which it appears to be, because they could amuse themselves with difficulties, and they were too much philosophers to assent to any thing that they did not understand, though it were confirmed by the sense and experience of all mankind. They were *rational* men, and it was below them to believe their senses unless their reason were convinced, and that was too acute to be convinced so long as any difficulty that could be started remained unanswered. And thus, under the pretence of reason and philosophy, they exposed themselves to the scorn and derision of all who had but the common sense of men without the art and subtilty of imposing upon themselves and others.

And it is the same thing in effect as to matters of religion. The Scriptures come down to us corroborated by all the ways of confirmation that the authority of any revelation at this distance of time could be expected to have, if it really were what we believe the Scriptures to be. Why, then, do some men doubt whether they be authentic? Can they disprove the arguments which are brought in defence of them? Can they produce any other revelation more authentic? Or is it more reasonable to believe that God should not

reveal himself to mankind than that this revelation should be his? No, this is not the case; but there are several things to be found in the Scriptures which *they* think would not be in them, if they were of divine revelation. But a wise man will never disbelieve a thing for any objections made against it, which do not reach the point nor touch those arguments by which it is proved to him. It is not inconsistent that that may be most true which may have many exceptions framed against it; but it is absurd to reject that as incredible which comes recommended to our belief by such evidence as cannot be disproved. Till this be done, all which can be said besides only shows that there are difficulties in the Scriptures, which was never denied by those who most firmly and steadfastly believe them.

But *difficulties can never alter the nature of things, and make that which is true to become false.* There is no science without its difficulties, and it is not pretended that theology is without them. There are many great and inexplicable difficulties in the mathematics; but shall we, therefore, reject this as a science of no value or certainty, and believe no demonstration in Euclid to be true unless we could square the circle? And yet this is every whit as reasonable as it is not to acknowledge the truth of the Scripture, unless we could explain all the visions in Ezekiel, and the revelations of St. John. We must believe nothing and know nothing, if we must disbelieve and reject every thing which is liable to difficulties. We must not believe that we have a soul, unless we can give an account of all its operations; nor that we have a body, unless we can tell all the parts and motions, and the whole frame and composition of it. We must not believe our senses, till there is nothing relating to sensation but what we perfectly understand; nor that there are any objects in the world, till we know the exact manner how we perceive them, and can solve all objections that may be raised concerning them. And if a man can be incredulous to this degree it cannot be expected that he should believe the Scriptures: but till he is come to this height of folly and stupidity, if he will be consistent with himself, and true to those principles of reason from which he argues in all other cases, he cannot reject the authority of the Scriptures on account of any difficulties that he finds in them, while the arguments by which they are proved to be of divine authority remain unanswered. And all the objections, which can be invented against the Scriptures, cannot seem nearly so absurd to a considering man, as the supposition that God should not at all reveal himself to mankind; or that the heathen oracles, or the Koran of Mohammed, should be of divine revelation.

Nothing is more frequent, than the charge of superstition and credulity, which is brought by modern unbelievers against Christians, for giving assent to moral evidence of such force as to amount to a moral demonstration. Yet the fact is, that the charge of credulity attaches with unanswerable force to these very rejectors of divine revelation. For they admit that a few illiterate Jews, devoted to external circumstances and to a national religion, conquered their prejudices, and

published an universal religion, which was free from the numerous rites and ceremonies of their nation; that they taught religious and moral doctrines, surpassing the wisdom of the highest heathens,— subdued the power and policy of the Jews and Gentiles, — speedily propagated their tenets among many nations, — and conquered the pride of learning, without divine assistance. The opposers of revelation admit, that many persons united in propagating a forgery, which produced them no advantage; and that not one of them was induced, either by promises or by threats, to betray a plot or to disown a testimony which exposed them to inconveniences. A man may endure *inconveniences* for his country to obtain wealth or power for himself, or in defence of a false religion which he believes to be true; but unbelievers cannot point out a single individual who exposed himself to insult, imprisonment, tortures, or death, which produced none of those *conveniences.* According to the creed which they profess, impostors were attached to virtue, and voluntarily endured every evil, in order to progagate opinions that were beneficial to society, but detrimental to themselves: that bad men reformed the religion and manners of all nations, or that good men attempted it by fraud and imposture. They admit that a few ignorant fishermen were able to make proselytes, in opposition to power and prejudice, to eloquence and learning; that crafty men chose for their hero a crucified malefactor, and suffered every evil in order to establish the religion of an impostor, who deluded them by false promises, if he did not rise from the dead. It is much easier to believe the facts recorded in the New Testament, than to suppose them false, and believe the absurd consequences that *must* follow from such a supposition. It is more credible that God should work a miracle for the establishment of a useful system of religion, than that the first Christians should act against every principle that is natural to men. It is as contrary to nature that men should prefer shame, affliction, and death, to esteem, comfort, and life, in support of a falsehood, as that the dead should be raised, or ponderous bodies hang unsupported in the air. All the mysteries of the Gospel shall be clearly and satisfactorily explained, when the unbeliever can show how these or any other things could have been accomplished without supernatural assistance. How little credit, then, is due to those pretenders to wisdom, who are obliged to admit things more incredible than those which they reject or disbelieve! Though they affect to resemble the ancient sages in wisdom and goodness, yet are they inferior to them in both these respects. The wisest heathen sages acknowledged their own ignorance and the imperfection of their faculties; their pretended successors are self-sufficient, and disclaim all assistance. The former laboured to discover arguments for the comfortable hope of a future state; the latter, to erase all apprehensions of it. The former paid great deference to things accounted sacred; while the latter turn every thing serious into jest and ridicule, and openly advocate immorality of every kind. The heathen philosophers spared even false religion for its political benefits; while the modern unbelievers attack the Gospel, which is not only capable of doing much good, but has also produced the greatest

blessings, moral, social, and political, in every nation that has embraced it.

Lastly, they who will not, by the arguments and proofs already exhibited, be convinced of the truth and certainty of the Christian religion, and be persuaded to make it the rule and guide of all their actions, would not be convinced (so far as to influence their practice and reform their lives) by any other evidence whatever,—not even though one should rise from the dead, on purpose to endeavour to convince them.

From what has been stated in the preceding pages, it is manifest that God has given us all the proofs of the truth of our religion that the nature of the thing would bear, or which it were reasonable either for God to give, or men to expect.

It is true the resurrection of Christ, and his other mighty works, must be confessed not to be such ocular demonstrations of the truth of his divine mission to after generations, as they were to those men who then *lived*, and *saw*, and *conversed with him*. But since the matters of fact are as clearly proved *to us* as it is possible for matters of fact to be, he that will run the hazard of losing eternal happiness, and falling into eternal misery, rather than believe the most *credible thing in the world*, merely because he does not see it with his own eyes, it is plain he does not disbelieve the thing for want of evidence, but because it is contrary to some particular *vice* of his which makes it his interest that it should not be true. And for that reason also he might have disbelieved it, though he had seen it himself.

And that this is the *real* cause is most evident from the lives and actions of most of those persons who pretend want of evidence to be the ground of their infidelity. Their lusts, their appetites, their affections, are interested; they are lovers of vice and debauchery, and slaves to evil habits and customs; and therefore they are not willing to discern the evidence, which would compel them to believe that which they cannot believe with any comfort so long as they resolve not to part with their belowed vices. Their hearts and affections are habitually fixed upon things here below; and therefore they will not attend to the force of any argument that would raise their affections to things above. They are enslaved to the sensual pleasures and sinful enjoyments of earth; and therefore they will not hearken to any reasonable conviction, which would persuade them to relinquish these present gratifications for the future and more spiritual joys of heaven. The love of this present world has blinded their eyes; and therefore they *receive not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto them; neither can they know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* (1 Cor. ii. 14.) In a word, the true and only reason why *men love darkness rather than light is, because their deeds are evil.* (John iii. 19.)

So long, therefore, as men continue under the dominion of their evil lusts and propensities, they will not be convinced, though the evidence of religion were even much stronger than it actually is. It is true that many men, who are now conscious and willing to acknowledge that they act contrary to all the reasonable evidence of religion,

are nevertheless apt to imagine that if its great truths were proved to them by some stronger evidence, they should by that means be induced to act otherwise. If, however, the true reason why these men act thus foolishly is, not because the doctrines of religion are not sufficiently proved, but *because they themselves are hurried away by some unruly passion*, it is plain they might continue to act as they do, though the evidence of these things were greater than it is. They are willing to imagine, that if they had seen our Saviour's miracles they would have embraced his doctrine; and if their affections were not set upon this world, they would do the same *now*. But if they love the pleasures of sin *now*, the case would have been the same if they had lived in our Saviour's time.

Others there are, who imagine that if a person was sent to them from the other world, they would immediately become new creatures. But if God should satisfy their unreasonable desires, there is little room to doubt, but as they *hearkened not unto Moses*, neither would they be *persuaded though one rose from the dead*. They might be terrified at first, but as soon as the fright was over, it is by no means impossible that their vicious habits would by degrees prevail over them. Some there are, in our present age, who pretend to be convinced of the being of spirits by the demonstration of their own senses, and yet we do not observe that they are more remarkably eminent for exemplary piety than any other good men.

It is not, therefore, for want of evidence that men disbelieve the great truths of religion, but *for want of integrity, and of dealing impartially with themselves*. Wherefore, if they will judge truly of the reasonableness of the Christian revelation, it is necessary that they become impartially willing to embrace whatever shall appear to be agreeable to reason, without interesting their lusts in the judgment; and when they have put themselves into this frame of mind, let them try if they can any longer reject the evidence of the Gospel: indeed, men who are of this good disposition, could not but give their assent to the doctrines of Christianity, on account of the intrinsic excellency of the things themselves, though the evidence was less than it is; nay, were there no other evidence but the bare excellency of the truths of religion, yet even in this case it would be most agreeable to reason to live according to the rules of the Gospel.

But this is not our case. God has afforded us, as the preceding pages have largely and particularly shown, many and certain proofs of the truth and divine authority of the Scriptures; even as *certain* as any matter of fact is capable of. And we now exhort men to believe, — not that which is barely possible and excellent, and probable, and of the utmost importance in itself; but that which they have all the positive evidence, and all the reason in the world to oblige them to believe.

To conclude: — No man of reason can pretend to say but that God *may* require us to *take notice* of some things at our peril; to *inquire into them*, and to consider them thoroughly. And the pretence of want of greater evidence will not excuse *carelessness* or *unreasonable prejudices*, when God has vouchsafed to us all that evidence

which was either fit for him to grant, or reasonable for men to desire, or of which the nature of the thing itself, that was to be proved, was capable.

CHAP. VI.

RECAPITULATION OF THE EVIDENCES FOR THE TRUTH AND DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.—MORAL QUALIFICATION FOR THE STUDY OF THE SACRED WRITINGS.

SUCH are the principal proofs, external and internal, for the genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures; and when the whole are taken together, every rational and candid inquirer must be convinced that we have every possible evidence for their truth and divine authority, which can be reasonably expected or desired.

I. No one who believes that there is a God, and that He is a Being of infinite power, wisdom, and knowledge, can *reasonably* deny that He can, if He thinks fit, make a revelation of himself and of his will to men, in an extraordinary way, different from the discoveries made by men themselves, in the mere natural and ordinary use of their own powers. And as the works of creation prove that He is a being of infinite power and goodness, so we may be assured that He who has given us the power of communicating our ideas to each other, cannot be at a loss for some proper method by which to make it apparent to his rational creatures that it is He who speaks to them. To admit the existence of a God and to deny Him such a power, is a glaring contradiction.

Since it cannot reasonably be denied, that it is POSSIBLE for God to reveal His Will to mankind, let us, in the next place, consider, which is most probable and agreeable to the notions we have of Him, whether He should or should not make such a revelation. Now, if any credit be due to the general sense of mankind in every age, we shall scarcely find one that believed the existence of God, who did not likewise believe that some kind of communication subsisted between God and man. This was the foundation of all the religious rites and ceremonies which every nation pretended to receive from their deities. Hence also the most celebrated legislators of antiquity, as Zoroaster, Minos, Pythagoras, Solon, Lycurgus, and others, all thought it necessary to *profess* some intercourse with heaven, in order to give the greater sanction to their laws and institutions, notwithstanding many of them were armed with secular power. And, what gave birth and so much importance to the pretended oracles, divinations, and auguries of ancient times, was the *conscious sense* entertained by mankind of their own ignorance, and of their need of a supernatural illumination, as well as the persuasion that the gods had a perpetual intercourse with men, and by various means gave them intelligence of future things.

The probability and desirableness of a divine revelation further appear from this circumstance, that some of the ancient philosophers,

particularly Socrates and Plato (though they did not believe the pretences to revelation made by their priests), yet confessed that they stood in need of a divine revelation, to instruct them in matters which were of the utmost consequence; and expressed their strong expectation that such a revelation would, at some future time, be vouchsafed, as should dispel the cloud of darkness in which they were involved.

From the preceding remarks and considerations, we are authorised to infer, that a divine revelation is not only probable and desirable, but also absolutely NECESSARY. In fact, without such revelation, the history of past ages has shown, that mere human reason *cannot* attain to any certain knowledge of God or of his will, of happiness, or of a future state. Contemplate the most polished nations of antiquity, and you will find them plunged in the grossest darkness and barbarism on these subjects. Though the works of nature sufficiently evidence a deity, yet the world made so little use of their reason, that they saw not God, where even by the impressions of himself he was easy to be found. Ignorance and superstition overspread the world; the ancients conceived the parts of nature to be animated by distinct principles, and, in worshipping them, lost sight of the Supreme Being. The number of deities continually increased; the grossest and most sanguinary idolatry prevailed; human sacrifices were universal; the vilest obscenities were practised under the name of religion; and the heathen temples were commonly places of prostitution, from which many of them derived a considerable revenue. All men, indeed, under pain of displeasing the gods, frequented the temples, and offered sacrifices; but the priests made it not their business to teach them virtue. So long as the people were punctual in their attendance on the religious ceremonies of their country, the priests assured them that the gods were propitious, and they looked no further. It cannot, therefore, excite surprise, that religion was every where distinguished from, and preferred to, virtue; and that a contrary course of thinking and acting proved fatal to the individual who professed it.

If we advert to the doctrines and practices inculcated by the ancient philosophers, who professed to teach the knowledge of virtue, we shall find the light of reason enveloped in equal obscurity. There was, indeed, a very small number of these, who were comparatively wise and good men; who entertained more correct notions of morality and religion than the rest of mankind; and preserved themselves, to a certain degree, unpolluted from the world. Yet these were never able to effect any considerable change in the prevailing principles and manners of their respective countrymen; their precepts being delivered to their own immediate pupils, and not to the lower orders of people, who constitute the great mass of society. Further, the moral systems of the philosophers were too refined for the common people; about them, indeed, the Stoics gave themselves no trouble, but seem to have considered them as little better than beasts; and even those moral truths, which the philosophers were able to prove and explain to others with sufficient clearness and plainness, they had not suffi-

cient authority to enforce in practice. At the same time, they entertained the most imperfect and erroneous notions relative to the nature of the Divine Being, his attributes and worship, and the duties and obligations of morality.

Thus, they were ignorant of the true account of the creation of the world, of the origin of evil, and of the cause of the depravity and misery which actually exist among mankind, and which they acknowledged and deplored. Equally ignorant were they of any method, ordained and established by the Almighty, by which a reconciliation could be effected between God and man, and divine mercy could be exercised without the violation of his attribute of justice. They were, moreover, ignorant — at least they taught nothing — of divine grace and assistance towards our attainment of virtue and preseverance in it. Their notions of the true nature of happiness were dark and confused; and they had dark and imperfect notions of the immortality of the soul, and of the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments: for, although their poets fancied an elysium and a hell, and mention the appearance of the ghosts of departed men, in a visible form, and as retaining their former shapes in the shades below, yet these were regarded rather as well-contrived restraints for the vulgar, than as articles of their own belief. Consequently, they had no perfect scheme of moral rules for piety and good manners; indeed, they were grossly ignorant of moral duties. Thus we find several sects esteeming *revenge* not only lawful but praiseworthy; *self-murder*, as a proof of a noble mind; and the *love of applause*, as the greatest incentive to the practice of virtue; at the same time they countenanced, both by arguments and example, the most flagitious practices. Destitute of proper authority to enforce the virtues and duties which they *did* recommend, they had no motives powerful enough to over-rule strong temptations and corrupt inclinations: their own example, instead of recommending their precepts, tended to counteract them, for it was generally, even in the very best of them, in direct opposition to their doctrines; and the detestable vices to which many of them were addicted entirely destroyed the efficacy of what they taught.

Lastly, if we advert to the pagan nations of the present age, we learn, from the unanimous testimony of navigators and travellers, that they are enveloped in the grossest ignorance and idolatry; and that their religious worship, doctrines, and practices are equally corrupt: yet they also possess the same light of reason which the ancient heathens enjoyed. The consideration of all which facts shows that a divine revelation is not only possible and probable, but also absolutely necessary to recover mankind out of their universal corruption and degeneracy, and to make known to them the proper object of their belief and worship, as well as their present duties and future expectations.[1]

But notwithstanding this mass of evidence, — especially the con-

[1] The details of evidence, on which the foregoing conclusions are formed, are given in Chap. I. pp. 1—19. *suprà*.

fessions made by the most distinguished ancient philosophers of their need of a revelation,—it has been contended by the opposers of revelation in modern times, that the book of creation or of nature is the only word of God; that philosophy and right reason are fully sufficient to instruct and preserve men in their duty; and, consequently, that no divine revelation is necessary. But it is certain that this book of nature is so far from being universally intelligible or convincing, that, though the existence of a God may be known from it, yet very few of the human race have learned even the principles of deism from it. In every age, where the Scriptures have been unknown, almost all men (as we have shown in the preceding pages) have been gross idolaters. How inadequate, indeed, this boasted book of nature is, for the purposes of universal instruction, is evident from the fact, that it requires translators, expositors, and preachers, as well as the Bible: but the bulk of mankind have neither time, money, nor inclination, to become astronomers themselves, nor to attend on the lectures of astronomers, supposing them to become preachers. The book of nature is an excellent book, but there are few indeed who understand it, while the Bible instructs the peasant as well as the philosopher in moral and theological knowledge; and the contradictory and discordant speculations of the enemies of divine revelation[1], both in religion and morals, only prove that such a revelation (if it had not already been given) is as absolutely necessary now as ever it was.

II. Such a revelation the Scriptures profess to be: but, are we certain,—considering them simply as writings professing to be the productions of certain men,—that they are GENUINE, that is, actually written by the persons to whom the different books are ascribed, and whose names they bear, and AUTHENTIC, that is, that they relate matters of fact as they really happened? The result of our investigation of these important questions is sufficient to satisfy the mind of every reasonable and candid inquirer.

No nation, indeed, in the world, can be more certain of the genuineness and authenticity of any of their public acts and records, which have been preserved with the utmost care, than we are of the genuineness and authenticity of the writings, called the Scriptures, which are now in our hands. For, in the *first* place, the manner in which they have been transmitted to us resembles that in which other genuine books and true histories have been conveyed down to posterity, and the most acute adversaries of the Scriptures have never been able to invalidate or to disprove the fact of their being so transmitted to us.[2] *Secondly*, the language and style of writing, both in the Old and New Testaments, are such as prove them to have been composed at the time and by the persons to whom they are ascribed, and, consequently, that they are both genuine and authentic.[3] *Thirdly*, such a multitude of minutely particular circumstances of time, place, persons, &c. is

[1] See pp. 19—32. *suprà*.
[2] For the transmission of the Old Testament, see Chap. II. Sect. I. pp. 36—61.; and for the New Testament, see Sect. II. pp. 62—103.
[3] See pp. 45, 46. *suprà*, for the language and style of the Old Testament, and pp. 94—96. for those of the New Testament.

mentioned in the books of the Old and New Testaments as affords a clear and unquestionable proof of their genuineness and authenticity. No forged or false accounts of things superabound thus in peculiarities: in fact, no forger *would* mention so great a number of particulars, since this would be to put into his reader's hands so many criteria by which to detect him; nor *could* any forger or relater of falsehoods produce such minute details. It is easy to conceive how faithful records, kept from time to time by persons concerned in the transactions, should contain such minute particulars of time, place, persons, &c. But it would be a work of the highest invention, and greatest stretch of genius, to raise from nothing such numberless particulars as are almost every where to be met with in the books of the Old and New Testaments; — particulars, the falsehood of which would most assuredly have been detected by the persons most interested in detecting them if they had been forged, but whose acquiescence with them, as well as their obedience to the injunctions contained in these books, are conclusive evidence in favour of their genuineness and authenticity, abundantly sufficient to convince every candid inquirer.[1] *Fourthly*, the moral impossibility of the books of the Old and New Testaments being forgeries is an additional evidence of their genuineness and authenticity; for it is impossible to establish forged writings as authentic, in any place where there are persons strongly inclined and well qualified to detect the fraud. If the *books of the Old Testament* be forgeries, they must have been invented either by Gentiles, by Jews, or by Christians. By the *Gentiles* they could not have been invented, because they were alike ignorant of the history and sacred rites of the Hebrews, who most unquestionably would never have given their approbation to writings invented by them. It is equally certain that they are not the fabrications of the *Jews*, because they contain various difficult precepts and laws, and also relate all the idolatries and crimes of that people, and the very severe punishments inflicted on them by God. Now all these discreditable facts would not be comprised in those books if they had been invented by the Jews. And the *Christians* could not have forged the books of the Old Testament, because these were extant long before the Christian name had any existence.[2] Equally impossible is it, that the books of the *New Testament* could have been forged; for the Jews were the most violent enemies of Christianity: they put its Founder to death; and both Jews and Gentiles persecuted his disciples with implacable fury; and they were anxious to stifle the new religion in its birth. If the writings of the New Testament had been forged, would not the Jews have detected the imposture? Is there a single instance on record, where a few individuals have imposed a history upon the world against the testimony of a whole nation? Would the inhabitants of Palestine have received the Gospels, if they had not had sufficient evidence that Jesus Christ really appeared among them, and performed

[1] See pp. 46—48. *suprà*, for the Old Testament, especially pp 55—57. for the Pentateuch, against which the efforts of modern unbelievers are chiefly directed, as the surest way to undermine the New Testament; and also pp. 96—98. for the New Testament.
[2] See pp. 38—40. *suprà*.

the miracles ascribed to him? Or would the churches at Rome or at Corinth have acknowledged the epistles addressed to them as the genuine works of Paul, if he had never preached among them? Or, supposing any impostor to have attempted the invention and distribution of writings under his name, or the names of the other apostles, is it possible that they could have been received without contradiction in all the Christian communities of the three several quarters of the globe? We might as well attempt to prove that the history of the reformation is the invention of historians, and that no revolution happened in Great Britain during the seventeenth century, or in France during the eighteenth century, and the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century.[1]

III. But, have the books of the Old and New Testaments been transmitted to us ENTIRE and UNCORRUPTED? We answer in the affirmative, and upon evidence the most satisfactory that can possibly be required. For, if they had been corrupted, such corruptions must have been introduced either by Christians or by Jews.

1. With regard to the *Old Testament*, the silence of the Jews (who would not fail to have noticed the attempt if it had been made) is a clear proof that it was never corrupted by the *Christians*. And if the *Jews* had either mutilated or corrupted these writings, they would have expunged whatever militated against the character or honour of their nation: but the silence of the prophets before the time of Christ, as well as of Christ and his apostles, fully proves that no obliteration or corruption had then been attempted. The constant reading of their sacred books in public and in private (which were at once the rule of their faith and of their political constitution), and the numerous copies both of the original as well as of the Septuagint version, together with the numerous sects and parties into which the Jews were divided after their canon was closed, and the reverence of every party for their law, all concur to render any attempt at falsification improbable and impossible *before* the time of Christ, and *after* that event, the same books being in the hands of the Christians, these would instantly have detected the malice and frauds of the Jews, if they endeavoured to accomplish such a design.[2]

2. Equally satisfactory is the evidence for the integrity and incorruptness of the New Testament, in any thing material. For the contents of its several books are precisely the same now as they were in the two first centuries; to which fact we may add, that the multiplication of copies, which were read both in public and in private, the reverence of the Christians for these writings, the silence of their acutest enemies, who would most assuredly have charged them with the attempt if it had been made, and the agreement of all the manuscripts and versions extant, are all so many proofs of the integrity and incorruptness of the New Testament; which are further attested by the agreement with it of all the quotations from it which occur in the writings of Christians from the earliest age to the present times.[3] It is true that certain books are cited or referred to in the Old and New

[1] See pp. 67, 68.
[2] See pp. 104—106. *suprà.*
[3] See pp. 108—111. *suprà.*

Testaments, which are not now extant: but an examination in detail of those books[1] (which does not admit of abridgment) has shown that none of the genuine or canonical books of Scripture have been lost.

IV. Not less satisfactory is the evidence for the *credibility* of the writers of the books of the Old and New Testaments. For, in the *first* place, they were so many in number, and lived at such a distance of time and place from each other, that, if they had been impostors, (which their disinterestedness, integrity, and impartiality prove them *not* to have been), it would have been impracticable for them to contrive and to carry on a forgery without being detected. And as they neither would nor could deceive the world, so they neither could nor would be deceived themselves. Every page, indeed, of these books proves that the writers of them had a perfect knowledge of the subjects which they have recorded; and their moral character, though rigidly tried, was never impeached by their keenest opponents.[2] *Secondly*, if there had been any falsehood in the account of such transactions as were generally known, it would have been easily detected: for these accounts were published among the people who witnessed the events related by the historians, and who could easily have detected fraud or falsehood, if any such there had been, but who did not attempt to question either the reality of the facts or the fidelity of the narrators. *Thirdly*, the credibility of the authors of the Old and New Testaments is further attested by the principal facts contained in them being confirmed by certain ordinances or monuments of great celebrity, which were instituted among Jews and Christians for the express purpose of commemorating particular facts or events in their respective histories, at the very time when those events took place, and which have subsisted from that time to the present day, wherever either Jews or Christians are to be found; but which ordinances most assuredly would not have been thus observed, in commemoration of *fictitious* events.[3] To this consideration we may add, that the wonderful establishment and propagation of Christianity is a most convincing proof of the entire credibility of the New Testament, and of the religion which it establishes; which was spread far and wide by the force of truth that accompanied the preaching of the Gospel, and which has continued to spread, even to the present time, notwithstanding all the persecutions and oppositions which it has experienced from its numerous, powerful, and most bitter enemies.[4] Nothing, indeed, but the plainest matter of fact could induce so many thousands of prejudiced and persecuted Jews to embrace the humiliating and self-denying doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, which they held in such detestation and abhorrence. Nor could any thing but the clearest evidence, arising from undoubted truth, make multitudes of lawless and luxurious heathens receive, follow, and transmit to posterity, the doctrine and writings of the apostles; especially at a time when the vanity of their pretensions to miracles, and to the gift of tongues, could be so easily discovered, if they had been impostors;—at a time

[1] See pp. 113—118.
[2] See Chapter III. Sect. I. pp. 119—136. *suprà*.
[3] See pp. 120—123. *suprà*, for the Old Testament, and pp. 124—137. for the New Testament.
[4] See pp. 137—139. *suprà*.

when the profession of Christianity exposed persons of all ranks and ages to the greatest contempt and to the most imminent danger. Further, an additional testimony is furnished to the credibility, truth, and genuineness of the Scriptures, by their agreement with profane history[1], and by the existence of various coins, medals, and ancient marbles[2], which attest the reality and truth of many of the facts therein recorded: in short, no history in the world is confirmed by such various and concurrent testimonies as that related in the Bible.

V. Moreover, that the Scriptures are not merely intitled to be received as credible, but also as containing the revealed will of God,—in other words, that they are DIVINELY INSPIRED, we have evidence of various kinds, amounting to moral demonstration. For their sacred origin is evinced by the most illustrious attestations, viz. miracles and prophecy, which carry with them the most manifest proofs of a divine interposition, and which it cannot reasonably be supposed that the Almighty would ever give, or permit to be given, to an imposture. The miracles were instantaneously and publicly performed before multitudes, both friendly and hostile to the persons by whom they were wrought; they were sensible and easy to be observed. Memorials were instituted at the time many of them were performed, which continue to be observed to the present time;—a manifest proof this, of the reality of those miracles, which the bitterest enemies of the Gospel who witnessed them could never gainsay or deny, though they vainly attempted to evade them.[3] The prophecies, also, were delivered during a long succession of ages by persons who lived at different and distant times; they were so numerous, so particular both with respect to nations and individuals, so opposite and apparently so irreconcileable, that no human wisdom could have devised them, no human power could accomplish them. Many of the predictions, which are found in the Old Testament, foretold unexpected changes in the distribution of earthly power. And whether they announced the fall of flourishing cities, or the ruin of mighty empires, the event has minutely corresponded with the prediction. To mention a few instances:—Of Nineveh such an utter end was made, that for many centuries its site could scarcely be traced;—Babylon is made "a desolation for ever, a possession for the bittern, and pools of water;"—Tyre, all voyagers and travellers concur in stating, is become "like the top of a rock, a place for fishers to spread their nets upon;"—and Egypt is "a base kingdom, the basest of the kingdoms," and still tributary, and in a state of the most abject servitude to strangers. But the great object of the prophecies of the Old Testament is the redemption of mankind. This, as soon as Adam's fall had made it necessary, the mercy of God was pleased to foretell. And, as the time for its accomplishment drew near, the predictions concerning it gradually became so clear, that almost every circumstance in the life and character of the most extra-

[1] See Chap. III. Sect. II. § 1. pp. 144—160. for the Old Testament, and § 2. pp. 162—188. for the New Testament.
[2] See Chap. III. Sect. II. § 3. pp. 188—199.
[3] See Chap. IV. Sect. II. pp. 203—270. *suprà.*

ordinary personage that ever appeared among men was most distinctly foretold. The connection of the predictions concerning the Messiah, with those which are confined to the Jewish people, gives additional force to the argument from prophecy; affording a strong proof of the intimate union which subsists between the two dispensations of Moses and of Jesus Christ, and equally precluding the artful pretensions of human imposture, and the daring opposition of human power. The plan of prophecy was so wisely constituted, that the passion and prejudices of the Jews, instead of frustrating, fulfilled it, and rendered the person whom they regarded, the suffering and crucified Saviour who had been promised. It is worthy of remark, that most of these predictions were delivered nearly, and some of them more than, three thousand years ago. Any one of them is sufficient to indicate a prescience more than human: but the collective force of all taken together is such, that nothing more can be necessary to prove the interposition of omniscience, than the establishment of their authenticity; and this, even at so remote a period as the present, we have already seen, is placed beyond all doubt.[1]

Besides these external attestations, the Scriptures have the most excellent internal characters of truth and goodness (which prove their divine origin and inspiration), in the sublimity, excellence, and sanctity of the doctrines and moral precepts which they deliver, and their admirable adaptation to the actual state and wants of mankind[2]; — in the harmony and connection that subsist between all the parts of which they consist[3]; — in their wonderful preservation, notwithstanding all the attempts which were made by their enemies to destroy them[4]; — and, finally, in their admirable tendency (which is demonstrated by the effects which are invariably produced wherever the Scriptures are cordially and sincerely believed) to promote the glory of God and the good of mankind, and the cause of virtue and righteousness in the world, and to prepare men by a life of faith and holy obedience upon earth for the eternal enjoyment of God in heaven.[5] To which we may add the infinite superiority, in every respect, of the Christian Revelation over every other religion which has ever been in the world.[6]

Upon the whole, we have such a number of evidences of the truth of the Scriptures as no man can resist, who duly and impartially considers them; and it is to the wilful ignorance of those evidences that we are to ascribe that infidelity which at present exists in different parts of the world.

VI. "The Scripture," as a late eminent prelate[7] has justly remarked, "is not a plan of Christianity finished with minute accuracy,

[1] See Chap. IV. Sect. III. pp. 279—290. *suprà*, for a view of the prophecies respecting nations; and pp. 290—296. for those relative to the Messiah; and pp. 298—307. for predictions delivered by Christ and his apostles; and the Appendix, No. VI. Chap. II. *infrà*, for the predictions of Jesus Christ concerning the destruction of Jerusalem.

[2] See Chap. V. Sect. I. pp. 334—380. *suprà.*

[3] See Chap. V. Sect. II. p. 402. *suprà.*

[4] See Chap. V. Sect. III. p. 404. *suprà.*

[5] See Chap. V. Sect. IV. pp. 405—430 *suprà*

[6] See Chap. V. Sect. V. pp. 430—438. *suprà.*

[7] Archbishop Secker's Works, vol. iii. pp. 310, 311.

to instruct men as in something altogether new, or to excite a vain admiration and applause; but it is somewhat unspeakably nobler and more extensive, comprehending in the grandest and most magnificent order, along with every essential of that plan, the various dispensations of God to mankind, from the formation of this earth to the consummation of all things." — "*Other* books may afford us much entertainment and much instruction, may gratify our curiosity, may delight our imagination, may improve our understandings, may calm our passions, may exalt our sentiments, may even improve our hearts. But they have not, they cannot have, that authority in what they affirm, in what they require, in what they promise and threaten, which the Scriptures have. There is a peculiar weight and energy in *them* which is not to be found in any other writings. Their denunciations are more awful, their convictions stronger, their consolations more powerful, their counsels more authentic, their warnings more alarming, their expostulations more penetrating. There are passages in them throughout so sublime, so pathetic, full of such energy and force upon the heart and conscience, yet without the least appearance of labour and study for that purpose; indeed, the design of the whole is so noble, so well suited to the sad condition of human kind; the morals have in them such purity and dignity; the doctrines, so many of them above reason, yet so perfectly reconcileable with it; the expression is so majestic, yet familiarised with such easy simplicity, that the more we read and study these writings, with *pious dispositions and judicious attention*, the more we shall see and feel of the hand of God in them." Thus are the Scriptures the only rule of our faith and standard of our lives; and thus do they point out to us the only way by which to attain solid comfort, peace, and happiness. "But that which stamps upon them the highest value, that which renders them, strictly speaking, *inestimable*, and distinguishes them from all other books in the world, is this, that they, and they only, contain *the words of eternal life*. (John vi. 68.) In this respect every other book, even the noblest compositions of man, must fail; they cannot give us that which we most want, and what is of infinitely more importance to us than all other things put together, — ETERNAL LIFE.

"This we must look for no where but in Scripture. It is there, and there only, that we are informed, from authority, of the immortality of the soul, of a general resurrection from the dead, of a future judgment, of a state of eternal happiness to the good, and of eternal misery to the bad. It is there we are made acquainted with the fall of our first parents from a state of innocence and happiness; with the guilt, corruption, and misery which this sad event brought on all their posterity; which, together with their own personal and voluntary transgressions, rendered them obnoxious to God's severest punishments. But to our inexpressible comfort, we are farther told in this divine book, that God is full of mercy, compassion, and goodness; that he is not extreme to mark what is done amiss; that he willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and save his soul alive. In pity, therefore, to mankind,

he was pleased to adopt a measure, which should at once satisfy his justice, show his extreme abhorrence of sin, make a sufficient atonement for the sins of the whole world, and release all who accepted the terms proposed to them from the punishment they had deserved. This was nothing less than the death of his Son Jesus Christ, whom he sent into the world to take our nature upon him; to teach us a most holy, pure, and benevolent religion; to reform us both by his precept and example; and lastly, to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification. By him and his evangelists and apostles we are assured that if we sincerely repent of our sins, and firmly believe in him and his Gospel, we shall, for the sake of his sufferings and his righteousness, have all our transgressions forgiven and blotted out;—shall be justified, that is, considered as innocent in the sight of God;—shall have the assistance of his Holy Spirit for our future conduct;—and, if we persevere to the end in a uniform (though from the infirmity of our nature, imperfect) obedience to all the laws of Christ, we shall, through his merits, be rewarded with everlasting glory in the life to come."[1]

Thus are the Scriptures a complete RULE of faith and practice, which contain "all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."[2] Now a RULE must be perfect in all its parts, not admitting either of addition or diminution: and such it has been proved that the Scriptures actually are. They "contain all things necessary to salvation—all things necessary to be believed or practised in order to the attainment of heaven, as they are revealed by the Holy Spirit, who knows what is necessary for us in this mortal state. And ALL *scripture* is stated by St. Paul to be *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.* (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.) Here the Scripture (of the Old Testament certainly, and the apostle's remark is equally applicable to the New Testament) is declared to be profitable not only for some things, but for all things; for instruction in the truth, for conviction of error, for correction of evil, and direction in what is good: and it is pronounced to be able to make

[1] Bishop Porteus, Lectures on St. Matthew, vol. i. pp. 18. 21.

[2] Article VI. Of the Confession of Faith of the United Church of England and Ireland. With this Confession coincide the Confessions of Faith of all the Reformed Churches. See the Harmony of Protestant Confessions, Section I. (London, 1842.) The following are the judgments of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and of the Congregationalists of Great Britain:—"The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture; unto which nothing is at any time to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or tradition of men." (Confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland, chap. i. sect. 6.) "The Scriptures of the Old Testament as received by the Jews, and the books of the New Testament as received by the primitive Christians from the evangelists and apostles, Congregational churches believe to be divinely inspired, and of supreme authority. These writings, in the languages in which they were originally composed, are to be consulted by the aids of sound criticism, as a final appeal in all controversies." Declaration of the Faith, &c. of the Congregational or Independent Dissenters, Art. i. (London, 1833. 12mo.)

the man of God, the private Christian believer as well as the Christian pastor, completely furnished for every part of his office or duty, and every man wise unto salvation. And if the Scriptures can make the Christian perfect or complete, they must contain every particular which is necessary to salvation, and answer every exigency in our Christian warfare. We know of no promise of mercy and forgiveness but what is therein mentioned; no threatening of wrath or condemnation but what is therein recorded; no Christian duties but those which are therein commanded; and no proceedings in the day of judgment but those which are specified in the Scriptures; no heaven and its joys but those which are therein described; and of no hell, with its terrible torments, but those which are therein exposed. And therefore the Scriptures must contain all that is necessary for us to know, believe, or practise.

Moreover, "a rule must be certain and unchangeable: but such is the Scripture, being the truth of the unchangeable God, 'that cannot lie.' Human opinions are of such a nature as to be continually subject to changes; but it is not so with the doctrine of salvation, which has always been the same. The Scripture, as a rule, directs our faith and conduct in such a manner, that the very least deviation from it renders us guilty of error. We cannot doubt of the Scripture being a rule, if we consider that the prophets, our Saviour, and the apostles always appeal to it. 'To the law and to the testimony,' says Isaiah. (viii. 20.) 'It is written,' said Christ, when contending with Satan (Matt. iv. 4. 7. 10.), and when dealing with the Sadducees. (Matt. xxii.) The apostles did the same in their endeavours to convert the Jews; nay, so perfect a rule did they consider the Scripture, that they sometimes draw an argument from its silence. 'To which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son?' (Heb. i. 5.); and the Berœans are commended for examining the doctrine of the apostles by this rule. (Acts xvii. 11.) We may add that the Scripture calls itself a *rule*. (Gal. vi. 16.) 'As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them,' &c.

"Not only the Scripture of the New, but also of the Old Testament, is the rule of our faith and practice, although we are no longer under the old dispensation, which has been evidently abolished. 'For whatever things,' says St. Paul (Rom. xv. 4.), 'have been written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.' Both Testaments contain substantially the same doctrine; they propose the same objects of faith, and enjoin the same precepts: they are both the foundation of the church, which is said to be 'built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets' (Eph. ii. 20.); and Peter shows that they 'do well' who 'take heed to the word of prophecy.' (2 Pet. i. 19.) The Scripture then is the only rule, nor can there be any other.

"*Reason* is no such rule, for it is blind, and understandeth not the things of God (1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.); it is liable to error, and is often deceived; the mysteries of faith are beyond its sphere; the natural man cannot comprehend them. Reason is as it were the eye of the mind, but Scripture is the standard, by which it measures the objects proposed. Reason is the instrument which the believer uses in examining the objects of faith by the Scripture, as by the infallible rule of truth, but it is not

the rule itself of these objects of faith. Yet this does not prevent us from acknowledging that reason has many uses. It is of service in vindicating the truth, against those who deny revelation altogether, or against those who, admitting revelation, endeavour to corrupt it with false interpretations; in illustrating the mysteries of religion by collecting together all that can be gleaned from the book of nature, from polite literature, from historical records, from philosophical and philological science; in drawing conclusions, and determining the truth of them; in comparing the text with the context, versions with the originals, the decisions of ecclesiastical teachers with the Scripture, and in distinguishing falsehood from truth, and what is legitimate from what is spurious."[1]

Consequently, "whatsoever is not read in Scripture, nor can be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite unto salvation." For, if there be no bounds set to faith, and we can never tell when we are furnished with all that is necessary to salvation, we may imagine that we believe aright now, and soon after may have a new creed imposed upon us, and may be led to believe *that* to be necessary which may be accounted superfluous; and, while we think we are established on the apostles' doctrine, we may be alarmed, on the one hand by a new light, on the other hand by tradition; as if we were in the wrong, and needed directions to set us right. Upon this consideration it is but fit that we should have a rule before us, to distinguish truth from falsehood; and according to the unanimous consent of the universal church of Christ, the Scriptures are that rule, by which our faith and morals (or manners) are to be directed and governed. For this reason, whatever is offered to us as an article of faith or rule of life, which is not in direct terms contained in the Scriptures, or which cannot by fair consequences be proved from them to belong to faith or a christian life, must be judged to be counterfeit and false; because it is not contained expressly in, or may be fairly proved from, the grand touchstone or rule for those points — the Holy Scriptures. And whatsoever is pretended or required to be done, which the Scriptures do not allow, or give us liberty to do, must not be accounted necessary to salvation; even though it should carry the commendation of great names with it, for the Scriptures are the rule which God has revealed and given. What agrees with them, God consents that we should believe and hold fast; but what differs from them or is contrary to them, He encourages us to reject and cast away, though an angel from heaven should preach and recommend it (Gal. i. 8.); for as He never revealed, authorised, or approved of it, all the artful pretences of man, whether prompted by learning or enthusiasm, can never put a real necessity upon it.[2]

The modern Church of Rome, however, teaches and affirms that every saving truth is not contained in Scripture, but in Scripture and in unwritten traditions; and denounces an anathema against all who despise such traditions. This dogma is propounded in the decree concerning the canonical Scriptures, which was made on the 8th day of April, 1546, by five cardinals, eight archbishops, and forty bishops of the Roman obedience (who were almost wholly Italians), calling

[1] Pictet's Christian Theology, translated by Reyroux, pp. 52, 53. London, 1834.
[2] Boys's Exposition upon the Thirty-nine Articles, p. 39. London, 1717. folio.

themselves "the sacred œcumenical and general Synod of Trent." The following are the material clauses of this decree:—

"The sacred, œcumenical and general Synod of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Spirit, the same three legates of the apostolic see presiding in it, keeping this constantly in view, that—all errors being removed—the very purity of the Gospel may be preserved in the church; which" [Gospel] "promised before by the prophets in the Holy Scriptures, our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God first published with his own mouth, then commanded to be preached to every creature, as the fountain of all saving truth and discipline of manners; and considering that *this truth and discipline are contained in the written books and unwritten traditions* which, received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or from the apostles themselves, the Holy Spirit dictating them, have come down even unto us, delivered as it were from hand to hand;" [the synod,] "following the example of the orthodox fathers, *receives and venerates with equal reverence and feeling of piety, all the books as well of the Old and of the New Testament, since one God is the author of both;* also *the said traditions pertaining both to faith and manners, as having been dictated either by the mouth of Christ, or by the Holy Spirit, and preserved by continuous succession in the Catholic church.*" [1]

The decree then proceeds to give a catalogue of the books of the Old Testament (including the uninspired apocryphal books as part of the divinely inspired books of Scripture), and declares that—

"*If any one* shall not receive for sacred and canonical these same books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic church, and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate edition; and *shall knowingly and deliberately despise the traditions aforesaid*,—LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" [or accursed.][2]

In the preface to the Catechism of the Council of Trent, sometimes called the "Catechismus ad Parochos," or "Catechism for Curates," it is further asserted that—

"All the doctrines of Christianity, in which the faithful are to be instructed[3], are derived from the word of God, which includes Scripture and tradition." [4]

And in the first of the twelve new articles of faith, superadded by Pius IV., Bishop of Rome, to the ancient faith of the Universal

[1] "Sessio quarta, celebrata die viii. mensis Apr. MDXLVI. Decretum de Canonicis Scripturis.—Sacrosancta œcumenica et generalis tridentina synodus, in Spiritu sancto legitime congregata, præsidentibus in ea eisdem tribus apostolicæ sedis legatis, hoc sibi perpetuo ante oculos proponens, ut sublatis erroribus, puritas ipsa evangelii in ecclesia conservetur: quod promissum ante per prophetas in scripturis sanctis, Dominus noster Jesus Christus Dei Filius, proprio ore primum promulgavit; deinde per suos apostolos tamquam fontem omnis et salutaris veritatis, et morum disciplinæ, omni creaturæ prædicari jussit: perspiciensque hanc veritatem et disciplinam contineri in libris scriptis, et sine scripto traditionibus, quæ ipsius Christi ore ab apostolis acceptæ, aut ab ipsis apostolis, Spiritu sancto dictante, quasi per manus traditæ, ad nos usque pervenerunt; orthodoxorum patrum exempla secuta, *omnes libros tam veteris quam novi Testamenti, cum utriusque unus Deus sit auctor, necnon traditiones ipsas, tum ad fidem, tum ad mores pertinentes, tamquam vel ore tenus a Christo, vel a Spiritu sancto dictatas, et continua successione in ecclesia catholica conservatas, pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipit, et veneratur.*" Sacrosancti et œcumenici Concilii Tridentini Canones et Decreta, pp. 23, 24. Parisiis, 1824.

[2] *Si quis* autem libros ipsos integros cum omnibus suis partibus, prout in ecclesia catholica legi consueverunt, et in veteri Vulgata Latina editione habentur, pro sacris et canonicis non susceperit; et *traditiones prædictas sciens et prudens contempserit*,—ANATHEMA SIT." Ibid. p. 25.

[3] Page 7. of "The Catechism of the Council of Trent. Translated into English by the Rev. J. Donevan, Professor, &c. Royal College, Maynooth, Dublin, 1829."

[4] Omnis autem doctrinæ ratio, quæ fidelibus tradenda sit, verbo Dei continetur, quod in scripturam traditionesque distributum est." Catechismus Concilii Tridentini, Apparatus, p. 5. Parisiis, '830.

Church of Christ, commonly called the Nicene Creed, the party reciting the so-called creed of Pius IV.[1], declares—

"I most stedfastly admit and embrace the *apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions* and all other observances and constitutions of the same church."[2]

The present authoritative doctrine of the Church of Rome, then, is, that the Word of God is partly in the Bible, and partly in unwritten tradition; and that the Scriptures do not contain the whole of God's revealed truth, and are but a partial rule of faith. In reply to this dogma, promulgated under the penalty of anathema, it might suffice to reply, that if the Scriptures are not a perfect rule of faith and practice, it must be because God either could not or would not cause all that was necessary to be consigned to writing. If the advocates of Rome say that the Almighty could not do this, then how can He inspire them at this time to deliver what they say is necessary? for He could as easily inspire the apostles as he can inspire them. Or, how could He deliver by tradition what is necessary? for He might as easily cause it to be written, that it might remain in writing, as speak it that it might remain in the church by tradition. There is no doubt, therefore, but that the Almighty could inspire men with the knowledge of all that is necessary, and cause them to commit it to writing for our admonition. If He could do this, and would not, then how can that be necessary which he never revealed? Or, how can He make us accountable for that which we never received? As he imparted no more than what the Scripture contains, He thought that sufficient, and we can be accountable for no more; for we cannot think that to be necessary which was never revealed, or ourselves to be responsible for what we never received. Whence it follows that the Holy Scriptures contain all that is necessary to *make us wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus* (2 Tim. iii. 15.); and that we need not give heed to the tradition of those who pretend to supply the alleged defects of Scriptures by their own vain traditions.[3]

But that the Scriptures are a perfect rule of faith, and contain all things necessary to salvation, and the consequent untenability of the dogma of the Romish Church, that unwritten traditions are a coordinate rule of faith with the Holy Scriptures, may yet further be proved by these two facts, viz., First, that oral tradition is utterly inadequate to constitute a complete rule of faith; and, secondly, that

[1] The so-called Creed of Pius IV. was published in 1564: the twelve new articles in it, therefore, came into the world only fifteen hundred and sixty-four years too late to be the faith of the true church of Christ. From the gradual growth of Popery, though papal dogmas were introduced before that period, they were never embodied in the form of a creed until the year 1564. This profession of faith is received throughout the whole Romish Church. It is made by every one who is ordained to the ministry, or to any ecclesiastical dignity, in that church, and every person who is admitted into it publicly reads and professes his assent to it. Mr. Charles Butler's Account of the Confessions of Faith . . . . of the Roman Catholic, Greek, and principal Protestant churches, p. 9.

[2] *Apostolicas et Ecclesiasticas Traditiones*, reliquasque ejusdem ecclesiæ observationes et constitutiones, purissime admitto et amplector." Coquelines, Bullarium, tom. iv. pars 2. p. 203. Romæ, 1745.

[3] Boys's Exposition upon the Thirty-nine Articles, p. 38

the sufficiency of Scripture is proved by Jesus Christ and by his inspired apostles, as well as by the subsequent testimony of early Christian writers.

1. The utter inadequacy of oral tradition to constitute a complete rule of faith is evident from the following considerations: —

[i.] History evinces the utter inadequacy of oral tradition, even under the most favourable circumstances.

In the first ages of the world it must have been much easier to preserve tradition pure than it could possibly be afterwards. There were then only a few things to be delivered concerning God; such as, that He was One Spiritual Being, the Creator of all things, who alone was the object of worship. When revelation was first given to man, men's lives were so long, that there was little danger lest the light of truth should be lost. Adam, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, and Noah were, in fact, all but contemporaries. Thus, Seth, the son of Adam, lived to within fifteen years of the birth of Noah: Methuselah lived above three hundred years while Adam was yet alive. Shem, the son of Noah, was a hundred years old when Methuselah died, and, after the deluge, lived upwards of a hundred years with Abraham; to whom another revelation was given, his fathers having become idolaters. "And in the few generations from Abraham to Moses, the faith again appears to have been corrupted, if not lost, although from the death of Joseph to the birth of Moses not seventy years had passed. Thus, when the world and the church were under the most favourable circumstances for preserving tradition of the truth unimpaired, it pleased God to leave the world, with occasional revelations indeed, but mostly with only traditional knowledge of the truth. Yet even so, such knowledge was soon corrupted, and easily lost. After that, God gave a fuller revelation to Moses, and enjoined that it should be committed to writing; and the book of the law was deposited in the most sacred place of the sanctuary, and most carefully guarded and watched, as of inestimable value. Thenceforward, when any great prophet was sent to Israel, though, during his lifetime, he orally taught the people, yet his words were ever committed to writing, that they might be preserved after his death. Nor do we know anything now concerning the teaching of any of the prophets, save only what is handed down to us, not by oral but by written tradition, viz. the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

"Most similar was the case with the Christian church. At first, whilst our Lord and his apostles were on earth, their personal teaching, and that of those taught by them, might have sufficed. Yet, even then, errors and pervertions were creeping in; and if they had not committed the substance of their teaching to writing, the false traditions of the Judaisers, the Cerinthians, or the Gnostics, might have come down through the church instead of the true traditions of the disciples of Christ. But we learn from ancient writers that what the apostles preached by word of mouth, they committed, or caused to be committed, to writing, lest the substance of their preaching should be lost. If tradition committed to the church had been sufficient to preserve the truth, then the writing of the four Gospels, and

of the other parts of the New Testament, would have been superfluous. But from the known and well-proved insufficiency of the former, the apostles, under the guidance of the Spirit, had recourse to the latter mode of insuring a source and a rule of faith."[1]

"The apostles at first owned these writings; the churches received them; they transmitted them to their posterity; they grounded their faith upon them; they proved their propositions by them; by them they confuted heretics; and they made them the measure of right and wrong; all that collective body of doctrine of which all Christians collectively made public confessions, and on which all their hopes of salvation did rely, were all contained in them, and they agreed in no point of faith which is not plainly set down in Scripture."[2]

[ii.] Further, experience shows that tradition tends to the corruption of truth.[3]

We see mankind so prone to misrepresentation, and so many additions made to a matter of fact as reported, that, if religion had not a more assured foundation than tradition, it could not have that credit paid to it which it ought to have. Among the Jews we have frequent instances of this uncertainty; so that Jesus Christ reproved them for making the law of God of no effect by their traditions. (Matt. xv. 6.) We find also that, from submitting to the authority of tradition, they were led to interpret literally the prophecies concerning the Messiah sitting on the throne of David; and consequently they rejected Jesus Christ from the poverty of his appearance. From the same cause they valued merely ceremonial observances above the moral law; and thought that a performance of the former would atone for a violation of the latter: so that, when they saw Christ and his apostles disdaining the authority of tradition, and setting the Gentiles at liberty from those observances, their prejudices against them were increased. And hence the rejection of the Messiah, and the persecution of his followers, originated in their belief of tradition.

[iii.] Such traditions as were held in the early ages, but unsupported by Scripture, were subsequently rejected.

Thus, the opinion of Christ's reign on earth for a thousand years, —the necessity of giving the Lord's Supper to infants,—and the divine inspiration of the seventy interpreters who were said to have executed the Greek version of the Old Testament, — have been laid aside in later times. Now this fact proves that, even though there did exist some apostolical traditions, the Christian church cannot know what they are; for, if she had this knowledge, she would not have given that title to such as she afterwards violated.

2. Since, then, history and experience evince that oral tradition is utterly inadequate to constitute a complete rule of faith, it only remains to show that the sufficiency of the Scriptures as the only

[1] Browne's Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, vol. i. pp. 181, 182.

[2] Bp. Jer. Taylor's Dissuasive from Popery, part ii. book i. sect. 3.

[3] These observations are chiefly abridged from Bishop Burnet's Exposition of the Sixth Article of the Confession of Faith of the Church of England.

rule of faith and practice is proved by Jesus Christ and his inspired apostles, and also by the testimonies of the early Christian writers usually termed the Fathers.

[i.] In all his disputes with the Pharisees Jesus Christ justified himself and his doctrine by the words of Scripture, but never once by tradition. He desired them to *search the Scriptures; for* (he said) *in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.* (John v. 39.) The phrase, *ye think,* did not refer to any particular conceit of theirs; but imports, that as *they thought,* so in them *they had eternal life.*

In the same way the apostles, in all their disputes with the Jews, made their appeals constantly to the Scriptures. Thus the Berœans are said to be *more noble* (more ingenuous) *than those of Thessalonica, in that they .... searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so* as Paul had preached to them. (Acts xvii. 11.) Paul says that *all scripture* is *given by inspiration of God, and* is *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.* (2 Tim. iii. 16.) Again, we are informed by Luke, that his design in writing his Gospel was, that we might *know the certainty of those things wherein* we *have been instructed.* (Luke i. 4.) The apostle and evangelist John likewise says that *these things were written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through his name.* (John xx. 31.) And for the same reason Peter, when he was near his end, wrote his second Epistle, in order that the Christian brethren might have it as a means of *keeping these things always in remembrance.* (2 Pet. i. 15.)

It has, however, been objected by Romanists that the apostles sometimes refer to a particular tradition existing in particular churches, as in 2 Thess. ii. 15. But that passage is no proof for the doctrine of tradition, as held by the modern Church of Rome. The word *traditions* (παραδόσεις) occurring therein applies to what Paul wrote, as well as to what he said; and it is evident, from the fifth verse of the same chapter, that the subject of which he wrote was the same of which he had spoken, when in the third verse he alluded to the falling away (or apostasy) and the revelation of the man of sin foretold by the apostle in that chapter.

But it is certain that by *tradition,* in the days of the apostles, was understood (as in 1 Cor. xv. 3.) merely the conveyance of the faith, and not any unwritten doctrines.

Romanists have also objected that tradition is necessary to explain the meaning of numerous obscure passages, which they say are to be found in the Scriptures.

It is freely admitted that there are difficulties in the Scriptures; but in all that relates to our faith and duty, they are perfectly clear and easy to be understood and practised, (especially if we compare Scripture with Scripture,) by the intelligent, humble, and prayerful study of the aids of sound criticism and interpretation. *The testimony of the* L*ORD is sure, making wise the simple.* Psal. xix. 7.

[ii.] As Jesus Christ and his inspired apostles appealed to the Scriptures alone (and not to tradition), as a perfect and sufficient rule of faith; so neither was any reliance placed on tradition by the early Christian writers, those who lived and wrote before the sixth century, and who are usually termed the Fathers of the Church.

Although these authors are not always to be depended upon as expositors of Scripture, and their works contain no inspired rule as to

observances or doctrines, which shall be binding on the Christian church in all ages; yet their writings contain important evidence for the genuineness and integrity of the Scriptures, and also much important and useful information concerning the doctrines, discipline, and usages of the ancient Christian church. The following passages will show that the early Fathers not only placed no reliance on tradition, but, in common with all the reformed churches, referred to the Scriptures as a perfect and sufficient final court of appeal.

"Irenæus says: 'We know that the Scriptures are perfect, as being spoken by the Word of God and His Spirit.[1]' Again: 'We have received the disposition of our salvation by no others but those by whom the Gospel came to us; which they then preached, and afterwards by God's will delivered to us in the Scriptures, to be the pillar and ground of our faith.[2]'

"Tertullian says: 'I adore the perfection of Scripture, which declares to me the Creator and His works . . . . whether all things were made of pre-existent matter, I have as yet no where read. Let the school of Hermogenes show that it is written. If it is not written, let them fear the woe which is destined for them who add to or take away.[3]'

"Origen says: 'The two Testaments . . . . in which every word that appertains to God may be sought out and discussed, and from them all knowledge of things may be understood. If anything remain, which Holy Scripture doth not determine, no third Scripture ought to be had recourse to . . . . but that which remaineth we must commit to the fire, *i.e.* reserve it unto God. For God would not have us know all things in this world.[4]'

"Hippolytus writes: 'There is one God, whom we do not otherwise acknowledge, brethren, but out of the Sacred Scriptures. For as he, who would profess the wisdom of this world, cannot otherwise attain it, unless he read the doctrines of the philosophers; so whosoever will exercise piety towards God, can learn it nowhere but from the holy Scriptures.[5]'

"Athanasius: 'The holy and divinely-inspired Scriptures are of themselves sufficient to the enunciation of truth.[6]' Again: 'These are the fountains of salvation, that he who thirsts may be satisfied with the oracles contained in them. In these alone the doctrine of salvation is contained. Let no man add to or take from them.[7]'

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[1] Cedere hæc talia debemus Deo qui et nos fecit, rectissime scientes quia Scripturæ quidem perfectæ sunt, quippe a Verbo Dei et Spiritu ejus dictæ. — Lib. ii. c. 47.

[2] Non enim per alios dispositionem salutis nostræ cognovimus, quam per eoper quos Evangelium pervenit ad nos: quod quidem tunc præconiaverunt, postea vero per Dei voluntatem in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt, fundamentum et columnam fidei nostræ futurum. — Lib. iii. c. 1.

[3] Adoro Scripturæ plenitudinem qua mihi et Factorem manifestat et facta. In Evangelio vero amplius et ministrum et arbitrum Rectoris invenio, Sermonem. An autem de aliqua subjacenti materia facta sint omnia, nusquam adhuc legi. Scriptum esse doceat Hermogenis officina. Si non est scriptum, timeat *væ* illud *adjicientibus aut detrahentibus* destinatum.—Adv. Hermogenem, c. 22. See also Apolog. c. 47. De Præscript. c. 6. &c.

[4] In hoc biduo puto duo Testamenta posse intelligi, in quibus liceat omne verbum quod ad Deum pertinet (hoc enim est sacrificium) requiri et discuti, atque ex ipsis omnem rerum scientiam capi. Si quid autem superfuerit, quod non divina Scriptura decernat, nullam aliam tertiam Scripturam debere ad auctoritatem scientiæ suscipi. . . . Sed igni tradamus quod superest, id est, Deo reservemus. Neque enim in præsenti vita Deus scire nos omnia voluit. — Origen. Homil. v. in Levit.

[5] Unus Deus est, quem non aliunde, fratres, agnoscimus, quam ex sanctis Scripturis. Quemadmodum enim, si quis vellet sapientiam hujus sæculi exercere, non aliter hoc consequi poterit, nisi dogmata philosophorum legat; sic quicunque volumus pietatem in Deum exercere, non aliunde discemus, quam ex Scripturis divinis.—Hippolyt. adv. Noetum, c. ix. Opera, Hamburg, 1716, tom. i. p. 239.

[6] *Αὐταρκεῖς μὲν γάρ εἰσιν αἱ ἅγιαι καὶ θεόπνευστοι γραφαὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας ἀπαγγελίαν.* — Athanas. contra Gentes, tom. i. p. 1.

[7] *Ταῦτα πηγαὶ τοῦ σωτηρίου, ὥστε τὸν διψῶντα ἐμφορεῖσθαι τῶν ἐν τούτοις λογίων· ἐν*

"Cyril of Jerusalem says that, 'Concerning the divine and holy mysteries of the faith, even the most casual remark ought not to be delivered without the sacred Scriptures'[1]

"Basil: 'Believe those things which are written; the things which are not written, seek not.'[2] 'It is a manifest defection from the faith, and a proof of arrogance, either to reject anything of what is written, or to introduce anything that is not.'[3]

"Ambrose: 'How can we use those things which we find not in the Scripture?'[4]

"Jerome: 'We deny not those things which are written, so we refuse those which are not written. That God was born of a Virgin, we believe, because we read; that Mary married after she gave birth to Him, we believe not, because we read not.'[5]

"Augustine: 'In those things which are plainly laid down in Scripture all things are found which embrace faith and morals.'[6]

"Vincentius Lirinensis begins with the admission, that 'The Canon of Scripture is perfect, and most abundantly sufficient for all things.'[7]

"Theodoret: 'Bring not to me human reasonings and syllogisms; I rely on Scripture.'[8]

"John Damascene: 'All things that are delivered to us by the Law, the Prophets, the Apostles, and the Evangelists we receive, acknowledge, and reverence, seeking for nothing beyond these.'"[9]

"It can scarcely be necessary to bring more or stronger proofs, that the Fathers with one voice affirm the perfection and sufficiency of the written word, for the end for which it was written, *i. e.* for a rule of faith, and for a rule of life."[10]

τούτοις μόνον τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας διδασκαλεῖον εὐαγγελίζεται· μηδεὶς τούτοις ἐπιβαλλέτω, μὴ δὲ τούτων ἀφαιρείσθω. — Ex Festali Epistola xxxix. tom. ii. p. 39. edit. Colon.

[1] *Δεῖ γὰρ περὶ τῶν θείων καὶ ἁγίων τῆς πίστεως μυστηρίων μηδὲ τὸ τύχον ἄνευ τῶν θείων παραδίδοσθαι γραφῶν.* — Cyril. Hierosol. Catech. iv. 12.

[2] *Τοῖς γεγραμμένοις πίστευε, τὰ μὴ γεγραμμένα μὴ ζήτει.* — Basil. Hom. xxxix. adv. Calumniantes S. Trin.

[3] *Φανερὰ ἔκπτωσις πίστεως καὶ ὑπερηφανίας κατηγορία ἢ ἀθετεῖν τι τῶν γεγραμμένων ἢ ἐπεισάγειν τῶν μὴ γεγραμμένων.* — Basil. De Fide, c. 1.

[4] Quæ in Scripturis sanctis non reperimus, ea quemadmodum usurpare possumus. — Ambros. Offic. Lib. i. c. 23.

[5] Ut hæc quæ scripta sunt non negamus, ita ea quæ non scripta sunt renuimus. Natum Deum de Virgine credimus, quia legimus. Mariam nupsisse post partum non credimus, quia non legimus. — Hieron. adv. Helvidium juxta finem, tom. ii p. 18, Paris, 1602; tom. iv. part ii. p. 141. edit. Benedict.

[6] In iis, quæ aperte in Scriptura posita sunt, inveniuntur illa omnia quæ continent fidem moresque vivendi. — August. De Doctrina Christ. lib. ii. c. 9. tom. iii. p. 24.

In like manner: — Proinde sive de Christo, sive de ejus Ecclesia, sive de quacunque alia re quæ pertinet ad fidem vitamque vestram, non dicam nos, nequaquam comparandi ei qui dixit, Licet si nos; sed omnino quod secutus adjecit, Si angelus de cœlo vobis annuntiaverit præterquam quod in Scripturis legalibus et evangelicis accepistis, anathema sit. — Aug. cont. Petilium, lib. iii. c. 6. tom. ix. p. 301.

[7] Cum sit perfectus Scripturarum Canon, sibique ad omnia satis superque sufficiat. — Vincent. Lirin. Commonitor. c. 2.

[8] *Μή μοι λογισμοὺς καὶ συλλογισμοὺς ἀνθρωπίνους προσενέγκῃς· ἐγὼ γὰρ μόνῃ πείθομαι τῇ θείᾳ γραφῇ.* — Theodoret. Dial. i. Ατρεπτ.

[9] *Πάντα τὰ παραδιδόμενα ἡμῖν διά τε νόμου, καὶ προφητῶν καὶ ἀποστόλων καὶ εὐαγγελιστῶν δεχόμεθα καὶ γινώσκομεν καὶ σέβομεν, οὐδὲν περαιτέρω τούτων ἐπιζητοῦντες.* — Damascen. lib. i. De Orthodox. Fide, c. 1.

[10] Browne's Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, vol. i. pp. 190—193. The sufficiency of Scripture is illustrated by Beveridge, Browne, Burnet, Dymock, Macbride, and Tomline, in their works on the Thirty-nine Articles. Valuable Sermons on this subject will be found from the pens of Dr. Vanmildert in his Bampton Lectures, pp. 61—76.; Mr. Dalton in the Bilston Sermons on the Creed of Pius IV. (Wolverhampton, 1841); Dr. Joseph Fletcher, in his Lectures on the Principles and Institutions of the Roman Catholic Religion (London, 1819); and by Mr. Griffin in his Sermons on the Creed of Pope Pius IV. (Dublin, 1852.) This subject is also copiously discussed by

VII. Such, then, being the utility, excellency, and perfection of the Holy Scriptures, since they are not merely the best guide we can consult, but the only one that can make us wise unto salvation, it becomes the indispensable duty of all carefully and constantly to peruse these sacred oracles, that through them they may become *perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work.*[1] This, indeed, is not only agreeable to the divine command[2], and to the design of the Scriptures, but is further commended to us by the practice of the church in ancient[3] and in modern times, and by the gracious promise made by Him who cannot lie, to all true believers, that "they shall *all* be taught of God."[4] What time is to be appropriated for this purpose must ever depend upon the circumstances of the individual. It is obvious that *some* time ought daily to be devoted to this important study, and that it should be undertaken with devout simplicity and humility; prosecuted with diligence and attention[5]; accompanied by prayer for the divine aid and teaching[6]; together with a sincere desire to know and perform the will of God, and, laying aside all prejudice, to follow the Scriptures wherever conviction may lead our minds. For it is indubitable, that persons of piety, who are anxiously desirous of the knowledge of divine truth, are aided by the Spirit of God in searching out the meaning of Scripture, particularly in such subjects as have an especial reference to faith and religious practice.[7]

Bishop Shuttleworth in his Treatise, "Not Tradition but Revelation" (London 1838); by Dr. Edwards, in his "Discourse concerning the Authority, Style, and Perfection of the Books of the Old and New Testaments," vol. iii. pp. 1—44.; and most elaborately by Archbishop Tillotson in his "Rule of Faith," especially part iv. sect. ii.; and by Dr. Elliott, in his "Delineation of Roman Catholicism," book i. vol. i. pp. 25—170. (New York, 1842), or pp. 1—90. of the London Edition, 1851, royal 8vo. To these works the student is referred, who is desirous of investigating this important topic.

[1] 2 Tim. iii. 17. [2] SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES, John v. 39.

[3] Psal. cxix. 24.; Acts xvii. 11.; 2 Tim. iii. 15.; Psal. i. 2.

[4] Isa. liv. 13.; Jer. xxxi. 31.; John vi. 45.; Heb. viii. 11. and John xvi. 13.; Luke xi. 13.; Eph. i. 17. "The Revelation of the Holy Ghost inspireth the true meaning of the Scripture to us: in truth, we cannot without it attain true saving knowledge." *Second Homily of the Scripture.* — "Quo etiam spiritu scripturæ factæ sunt, eo spiritu legi desiderant, ipso etiam intelligendæ sunt. Nunquam ingredieris in sensum Pauli, donec usu bonæ intentionis in lectione ejus, et studio assiduæ meditationis, spiritum ejus imbiberis. Nunquam intelliges David, donec ipsâ experientiâ ipsos Psalmorum affectus indueris. Sicque de reliquis." Bernardi Epist. ad Fratres Montis Dei.

[5] "Without *attention*," says a pious but neglected writer of the seventeenth century, "all books are alike, and all equally insignificant; for he that adverts not to the sense of what he reads, the wisest discourses signify no more to him than the most exquisite music does to a man perfectly deaf. The letters and syllables of the Bible are no more sacred than those of another book: it is the sense and meaning only that is divinely inspired; and he that considers only the former may as well entertain himself with the spelling-book." Lively Oracles, sect. viii. § 25.

[6] "Though the natural man may well enough apprehend the letter and grammatical sense of the word, yet its power and energy,—that insinuative, persuasive force whereby it works upon our hearts, — is peculiar to the Spirit; and, therefore, *without his aids* the Scripture, while it lies open before our eyes, may still be as a book that is sealed (Isa. xxix. 11.), and be as ineffective as if the characters were illegible." Ibid. sect. viii. § 24.

[7] Non est dubitandum, viros pios et veritatis divinæ cupidos adjuvari a Spiritu Dei in scrutando Scripturæ sensu, in iis quidem rebus quæ propriè ad fidem et mores pertinent. — Ernesii, Institutio Interpretis Novi Testamenti, p. 25. Lipsiæ, 1792. On the intellectual and moral qualifications for the study and interpretation of the Scriptures, see Vol. II. pp. 202—211.

In order, however, to study the Scriptures aright, it should be recollected that they are not to be contemplated as one entire book or treatise. "The knowledge of divine truth is, indeed, perfectly distinct from human science, in that it emanates immediately from the fountain of Infinite Wisdom. Yet has it this in common with human science, that it is made by its heavenly Author to flow through the channel of human instruction. While, therefore, *we receive it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the Word of God* (1 Thess. ii. 13.), we must nevertheless examine it as it is delivered to us, clothed in the language of men, and subject to the general rules of human composition. The deference due to it as a divine production does not interfere with this province of human learning; it only exacts submission with respect to the subject-matter of the revelation, to which the critical investigation is entirely subordinate."[1]

But besides the paramount importance of the contents of the Holy Scriptures, a further motive to the diligent study of them presents itself in the facilities that are offered to us for this purpose by the numerous publications on the criticism and interpretation of the Bible, which have appeared at different times, and whose most valuable precepts it is the design of the present work to concentrate. In fact, "a willingness to know and to do the will of God, implies a willingness to resort to all necessary helps for advancement in the truth, and for security against error."[2] The value of such helps was never questioned, except by those who chose to despise what they did not possess. "They are of distinguished value in theology; but then, like every thing else that is excellent, they have their province. While they are supreme in the concerns of human investigation, they are subordinate in those of divine. They cannot communicate a right disposition of heart, nor can they compensate for its absence. Like the armour of the ancient warrior, if the native vigour of the frame can wield them with alertness and skill, they are his defence and ornament: but if this vigour be wanting, they are of no advantage whatever; they become, on the contrary, a burden and an incumbrance." A practical statement of the various aids to the interpretation of the Scriptures will be found in the second volume of this work.

"I can speak it from experience," says the celebrated Erasmus[3], "that there is little benefit to be derived from the Scriptures if they be read cursorily or carelessly; but if a man exercise himself therein constantly and conscientiously, he shall find such an efficacy in them as is not to be found in any other book whatsoever." — "The *genuine* philosophy of Christ," says the same eminent scholar and critic, "cannot be derived from any source so successfully as from the books of the Gospels and the Apostolic Epistles; in which, if a man philosophise with a pious spirit, *praying* rather than *arguing*, he will find that there

[1] Vanmildert's Bampton Lectures, p. 22.

[2] Vanmildert's Bampton Lectures, p. 41. The whole of his second sermon, on the moral qualifications requisite for a right apprehension of the Sacred Word, is truly excellent.

[3] Præf. in Paraphr. in Luc. p. 20. Basileæ, 1533.

is nothing conducive to the happiness of man, and the performance of any duty of human life, which is not, in some of these writings, laid down, discussed, and determined, in a complete and satisfactory manner."[1]

[1] Existimo puram illam Christi philosophiam non aliunde felicius hauriri, quàm ex evangelicis libris, quàm ex apostolicis literis: in quibus si quis piè philosophetur, *orans* magis quàm *argumentans*, nihil esse inveniet, quod ad hominis felicitatem, nihil quod ad ullam hujus vitæ functionem pertineat, quod in his non sit traditum, discussum, et absolutum. ERASMUS, cited in Dr. Knox's Christian Philosophy, p. 295. 2d edit.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

ON THE BOOKS COMMONLY TERMED THE APOCRYPHA.

SECTION I.

ON THE APOCRYPHAL BOOKS ATTACHED TO THE OLD TESTAMENT.

[*Referred to in p. 46. of this Volume.*]

Besides the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which are universally acknowledged to be genuine and inspired writings, both by the Jewish and Christian Churches, there are several other writings, partly historical, partly ethical, and partly poetical, which are usually printed at the end of the Old Testament in the larger editions of the English Bible, as well as in many editions of Luther's German Version of the Bible, — under the appellation of the "Apocrypha," — that is, books not admitted into the sacred canon, being either spurious, or at least not acknowledged to be divine. The word Apocrypha is of Greek origin, and is either derived from the words ἀπο τῆς κρύπτης, because the books in question were removed *from the crypt*, chest, ark, or receptacle, wherein were deposited the sacred books, the authority of which was never doubted; or, more probably, from the verb ἀποκρύπτω, to *hide or conceal*, because they were concealed from the generality of readers, their authority not being recognised by the universal church, and because they are books which are destitute of proper testimonials, their original being obscure, and their authors unknown.

The Protestant Churches not only account those books to be apocryphal, and merely human compositions, which are esteemed such by the modern Church of Rome, as the prayer of Manasseh, the third and fourth books of Esdras, the addition at the end of Job, and the hundred and fifty-first psalm; but also the following books, which that church placed in the same rank with the divinely inspired Law and the Prophets, by the decree of the fourth session of her last council, convened at Trent, dated April 8th, 1546, viz. the books of Tobit, Judith, the additions to the book of Esther, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch the prophet, with the Epistle of Jeremiah, the Song of the Three Children, the story of Susanna, the story of Bel and the Dragon, and the first and second books of Maccabees. It is not difficult to account for the modern Church of Rome's classing these books among the divinely inspired Scriptures of the Old Testament. In certain of these apocryphal books, doctrines are taught and practices are sanctioned, which are found among the doctrines of the Romish

Church; but which cannot be reconciled with what is taught in the genuine Scriptures. The apocryphal books above enumerated are unanimously rejected by all Protestant Churches from the divinely inspired Scriptures, because they possess no authority whatever, either internal or external, to procure their admission into the sacred canon, — the only rule of our faith and practice.

I. The apocryphal books possess no internal authority to procure their admission into the sacred canon.

§ 1. *Not one of them is extant in pure ancient Biblical Hebrew.*

With the exception of the fourth book of Esdras, which is now extant only in Latin, but probably was translated from the Greek, the apocryphal books were all written by Alexandrian Jews in the Greek language (though some were originally written in Hebrew [1]); and by them were inserted in their Septuagint version of the Old Testament, along with the sacred books of Scripture. It is an historical matter of fact, that the Greek language was not known to the Jews until long after inspiration had ceased, and the canon of the Old Testament was closed.

§ 2. *They were all written subsequently to the cessation of the prophetic spirit.*

In the prophecy of Malachi (iv. 4—6.) it is intimated that after him no prophet should arise until John the Baptist, the harbinger of the Messiah, should appear in the spirit and power of Elijah; and the Jews unanimously agree that the prophetic spirit ceased with Malachi. The author of the book of Wisdom for instance *pretends* that it was written by Solomon (whom he personates in viii. 21. and ix. 4, 5.) — a pretension not only manifestly false, but which also proves that book not to have been inspired. For, in the first place, the author, whoever he was, has many allusions to, not to say quotations from Isaiah [2], who did not prophesy till many ages *after* the time of Solomon, and consequently the book could not have been written by him. Secondly, it represents the Israelites (Wisdom xv. 14.) as being *in subjection to their enemies;* whereas we know from the Sacred Writings, that they enjoyed great peace and prosperity during *all the days of Solomon: when Judah and Israel dwelled safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree* (1 Kings iv. 25.); and *the* Lord gave Solomon *rest on every side*, so that there was *neither evil nor adversary occurrent.* (v. 4.) Thirdly, this book contains several words borrowed from the Grecian games, which were not in use for many ages after the time of Solomon, and which demonstrate that the author was a Hellenistic Jew, who lived many hundreds of years after the cessation of the prophetic spirit.[3] So the author of the book of Ecclesiasticus, in xlvii. 24, 25., plainly alludes to the Babylonish captivity.

§ 3. *Not one of the writers or authors of them, in direct terms, advances any claim to inspiration.*

On the contrary, so far are the authors of the apocryphal books from asserting their own inspiration, that some of them say what amounts to *an acknowledgment that they were not inspired.* Thus in the prologue to the book of Ecclesiasticus, the son of Sirach intreats the reader to pardon any errors he may have committed in translating the words of his grandfather Jesus into Greek. "*Wherefore let me intreat you to read it with favour and attention, and to pardon us wherein we may seem to come short of some words which we have laboured to interpret. For the same things*

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[1] From internal evidence it appears that the books of Judith and of Tobit were originally written in Hebrew (or Chaldee), and Jerome states that the first book of Maccabees was written in Hebrew. (Op. tom. i. p. 322. Paris, 1693); from which languages they were translated into Greek. The book of Ecclesiasticus is a translation into Greek by Jesus the son of Sirach, from an imperfect work of his grandfather, who, he states (in the prologue to this book), wrote it in Hebrew.

[2] Compare Wisd. i. 1. with Isa. lvi. 1.; iii. 14. with Isa. lvi. 4. 5.; v. 18. with Isa. lix. 17.; ix. 13. with Isa. xl. 13, 14.; and especially xiii. 11—19. with Isa. xliv. 13—17.

[3] "Sapientia," says Jerome in his preface to the Book of Proverbs, "apud Ebræos nusquam est; quin et ipse stylus Græcam eloquentiam redolet." (Op. tom. i. p 398.)

uttered in Hebrew, and translated into another tongue, have not the same force in them: and not only these things, but also the law itself and the prophets, and the rest of the books, have no small difference when they are spoken in their own language." In 1 Macc. iv. 46.; ix. 27., and xiv. 41., it is confessed that there was at that time no prophet in Israel[1]: the second book of Maccabees (ii. 23.) is an avowed abridgment of five books originally written by Jason of Cyrene[2]; and the author concludes with the following words, which are utterly unworthy of a person writing by inspiration:—"*If I have done well, and as is fitting the story, it is that which I desired; but, if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain unto.*" (2 Macc. xv. 38.)

§ 4. *The Apocryphal Books contain many things which are either* FABULOUS, *or* CONTRADICTORY TO THE CANONICAL SCRIPTURES, *in facts, doctrines, and moral practice, and also contradictory to* AUTHENTIC PROFANE HISTORY.

"There is internal evidence in these books to prove that they are not canonical," or inspired. "A book cannot be from God which contains falsehood, or which expressly contradicts doctrines which we know to be from God. The self-evidencing power of the Scriptures attests their divine authority; but the self-contained evidence of the apocryphal books tends to prove that they have not the character of the oracles of God, and have no right to a place among them."[3]

A few instances, out of many which might be adduced, will suffice to demonstrate the correctness of this observation.[4]

[i.] *Fabulous Statements.*

(1.) Rest of the chapters of the Book of Esther, x. 6. *A little fountain became a river, and there was light, and the sun, and much water. The river is Esther, whom the king married and made queen.* xiv. 2.

(2.) The story of Bel and the Dragon is, confessedly, a mere fiction, which contradicts the account of Daniel's being cast into the lions' den.

(3.) The story of *water* being converted into *fire*, and *vice versâ*. (2 Macc. i 19—22.)

(4.) The story of Judith, from the historical, chronological, and other difficulties with which it abounds, is justly considered as fabulous. After the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity (when the transactions related in that book are said to have occurred), there was *no* Nabuchodonosor king of Assyria, by whose army Judæa could be invaded. Besides, the long-continued peace, which is said to have been procured by Judith, must have continued *eighty* years: which is a pure fiction, contradicted by history.

[ii.] *Statements which are contradictory to the History related in the Canonical Books and to other Statements contained in the Apocryphal Books.*

(1.) The author of the book of the Wisdom of Solomon alludes to the people of Israel as being in subjection to their enemies, which was not the case during Solo-

[1] In 1 Macc. iv. 46., the priests, whom Judas Maccabæus appointed to cleanse the sanctuary, pulled down the altar of burnt offerings, "*and laid up the stones in the mountain of the temple, in a convenient place,* UNTIL THERE SHOULD COME A PROPHET *to show what should be done* with them." 1 Macc. ix. 27. "*So there was great affliction in Israel, the like whereof was not since the time that* A PROPHET WAS NOT SEEN *among them.*" 1 Macc. xiv. 41. *The Jews and priests were well pleased that Simon should be* their governor for ever, UNTIL THERE SHOULD ARISE A FAITHFUL PROPHET among them. This was a very remarkable reservation on the part of the Jewish people; and evidently shows their expectation of *a prophet like unto Moses.* (Deut. xviii. 18.)

[2] 2 Macc. ii. 23. "All these things, I say, *being declared by Jason of Cyrene in five books, we will assay to abridge in one volume.*"

[3] Dewar's Evidence of Divine Revelation, p. 619.

[4] Chamier has produced many *scores* of falsehoods and contradictions to the inspired Scriptures, which occur in the apocryphal books: and he has triumphantly refuted the allegations of Romanists who have attempted to vindicate them. Panstratiæ Catholicæ tom. i. pp. 106—138. (Genevæ, 1626, fol.) The same subject is also most copiously treated by our learned countryman, Dr. John Rainolds, in his Censura Librorum Apocryphorum Veteris Testamenti adversus Pontificios, imprimis Robertum Bellarminum. Oppenheimii, 1611. 2 tomis, 4to.

mon's reign. We read, indeed, that he had enemies in the persons of Hadad, Rezon, and Jeroboam (1 Kings xi. 14. 23. 25, 26.), who vexed him: but we nowhere find that they subdued his people; and the schism of the ten tribes did not take place until after the death of Solomon.

(2.) Baruch is said (i. 1, 2.) to have been carried into *Babylon*, at the very time when Jeremiah tells us (xliii. 6, 7.) that he was carried into the land of *Egypt*.

(3.) The story in 1 Esdras iii. iv., besides wanting every mark of the majesty and sanctity of the Sacred Writings, contradicts Ezra's account of the return of the Jews from Babylon under Cyrus.

The first and second books of Maccabees contradict each other[1]: viz.

(4.) In 1 Macc. vi. 4—16. Antiochus Epiphanes is said to have died in *Babylon*; and in 2 Macc. ix. 28. he is represented as dying a miserable death *in a strange country among the mountains*.

(5.) In 1 Macc. ix. 3. 18. Judas Maccabæus is said to have been slain *in the first month of the hundred and fifty-second year*: But in 2 Macc. i. 10 *in the hundred four-score and eighth year the people that were at Jerusalem and in Judea, and the council, and Judas, sent greeting and health unto Aristobulus . . . and to the Jews that were in Egypt*. Thus Judas is made to join in sending a letter only thirty-six years AFTER his death!

(6.) The accounts given of the transactions of Nicanor in 1 Macc. vii. are totally inconsistent with the narrative in 2 Macc. xiv. and xv.

(7.) In "the Song of the Three Children" (v. 15.) we read, *neither is there at this time prince or* PROPHET: which is absolutely false, as well as contradictory to the book of the prophet Daniel.

(8.) In the rest of the chapters of the book of Esther, ch. xvi. 10. directly contradicts the canonical book of Esther. Haman is there termed a *Macedonian*. In Esther iii. 1. 10. and viii. 3. he is termed an *Agagite*, that is, an Amalekite, descended from Agag, a former king of Amalek.

(9.) Baruch (i. 3, 4.) says that, in the fifth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, *he read the words of the book in the hearing of Jechonias the son of Joachim king of Juda*, and the ears of all the people that came to hear *the book, from the lowest unto the highest, even of all them that dwelt at Babylon*. This statement directly contradicts Jer. xliii. 10., where we read that Jeremiah and Baruch were taken into Egypt after the death of Gedaliah. Also in Baruch i. 10. mention is made of the *altar of the Lord*: whereas that altar was no longer in existence, it having been destroyed when Nebuzar-adan *burnt the house of the Lord*. (Jer. lii. 13.)

(10.) In the book of Tobit, the angel that is introduced (v. 12.) as falsely representing himself as being a kinsman of Tobit, in xii. 15. contradicts himself, by affirming that he is Raphael, one of the holy angels. The author of this book has also added to the views of God and of Providence, delineated in the Old Testament, tenets of Assyrian or Babylonian origin.

[iii.] *Contradictory Doctrines.*

(1.) *Prayers* FOR *the Dead.* — 2 Macc. xii. 43, 44. *And when he had made a gathering throughout the company, to the sum of* 2000 *drachms of silver, he sent it to Jerusalem to offer a sin offering, doing therein very well and honestly: for, if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead.*

(2) *Prayers* OF *the Dead.* In Baruch iii. 4., the Jews at Babylon are introduced as beseeching the *Lord Almighty*, the *God of Israel*, to *hear now the prayers* OF *the dead Israelites.*

Both these passages contradict the whole tenor of the Sacred Scriptures, which no where enjoin or allow of prayers for or by the *dead*. The dead are utterly unconscious of every person and thing. *The grave cannot praise thee: death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.* (Isa. xxxviii. 18.) *The dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward: for the*

[1] These contradictions are so flagrant that Bellarmine, Canus, and other papists have exerted themselves to the utmost (but in vain) to elude the force of the objection which they furnish to the canonicity of the apocryphal books of Maccabees. Their arguments are refuted at length by Chamier (Panstratiæ Catholicæ Tom. i. pp. 129, 130.); and by Dr. Whitaker (Op. tom. i. p. 275.)

memory of them is forgotten. Neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun. (Eccl. ix. 5, 6.)

(3.) *The* HEATHEN *Notion of the Transmigration of Souls*, which is equally contradictory to the Bible, is asserted in Wisd. viii. 19, 20. *For I was a witty child, and had a good spirit; yea, rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled.*

(4.) *Justification by the Works of the Law* (in opposition to the Scriptures, which teach that we are justified or accounted righteous only by faith and not for our own works or deservings) is taught in various parts of the apocryphal books. Thus:—

[i.] 2 Esdras viii. 33. *The just which have many good works laid up with thee, shall out of their own deeds receive reward.*

[ii.] The same angel, who is represented as being guilty of lying to Tobit, instructs him and his son to rely for salvation upon prayer and fasting, alms and righteousness: Tobit, xii. 8, 9. *Prayer is good with fasting, and alms, and righteousness . . . . It is better to give alms than to lay up gold: for alms doth deliver from death, and shall purge away all sin. Those that exercise alms and righteousness shall be filled with life.* Tobit was an apt scholar, and with his dying breath exhorted his son to rely upon his alms and righteousness, xiv. 11. *Wherefore now, my son, consider what alms doeth, and how righteousness doth deliver.*

(5.) The author of the book of Ecclesiasticus, Jesus or Joshua, the son of Sirach, gravely affirms (iii. 3.), *that whoso honoureth his father maketh an atonement for his sins*, and (30.) that *alms maketh an atonement for sins.* According to this writer, alms not only deliver a man's own soul, but are also works of supererogation available for the salvation of his children. (xvii. 22.) *The alms of a man is as a signet with him*, [that is, the LORD or Jehovah]; *and he will keep the good deeds of man as the apple of the eye, and give repentance to his sons and daughters.* And in xxxv. 3. he says, that *to forsake unrighteousness is a propitiation!* The Scriptures of truth know nothing of propitiation by alms, or of the merit of good works. They declare that we are *justified by faith* (Rom. v. 1.), and that *the righteousness of God is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of law.* (Rom. iii. 22—24. 27, 28.) *By grace are ye saved through faith, and that* NOT *of yourselves; it is the gift of God:* NOT *of works, lest any man should boast.* (Eph. ii. 8, 9.)

(6.) *Sinless Perfection, in this life.* Jesus the son of Sirach says, in Ecclus. xiii. 24. that *riches are good to him that hath no sin.* But what say the canonical or inspired Scriptures? Eccles. vii. 20.: *There is* NOT *a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth* NOT. Rom. iii. 23.: ALL *have sinned and come short of the glory of God.* 1 John i. 8.: *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.* Therefore (Psal. cxliii. 2.) *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified.*

[iv.] *Immoral Practices commended in the Apocryphal Books, which Practices are prohibited in the Scriptures.*

(1.) *Lying*—The instances cited in No. (10.), p. 472. may also be adduced here.

(2.) A desperate act of *Suicide* (which is forbidden in Exod. xx. 15. *Thou shalt* NOT *kill*), by a Jew named Razis, is related in 2 Macc. xiv. 41—46., as a manful act, and in terms of great commendation.

(3.) *Assassination*, which is equally prohibited in Exod. xx. 15., is commended in the book of Judith; who is described as offering a prayer to Almighty God, in which the cruel and perfidious deed in slaughtering the Shechemites (whose base murder is justly condemned by Jacob in Gen. xlix. 7.) is mentioned in terms of gratitude, and is used as an argument to obtain help from above in her meditated attempt upon the life of Holofernes. Compare Judith ix. 2—9.

(4.) *Magical Incantations*, which are forbidden in Lev. ix. 26. and in Deut. xviii. 10, 11. 14., are mendaciously introduced in Tobit vi. 16, 17. as given by the advice of an angel of God.

[v.] *Passages in the Apocryphal Books which are so inconsistent with the relations of all other profane historians, that they cannot be admitted without much greater evidence than belongs to these books.*

(1.) In 1 Macc. viii. 16. it is said that the Romans *committed their government to*

ONE MAN EVERY YEAR, *who ruled over all that country, and that all were obedient to that one, and that there was neither envy nor emulation amongst them.* Now this assertion is contradicted by *every* Roman historian without exception. The imperial government was not established until more than a century *after* the time when that book was written.

(2.) In 1 Macc. i. 6. Alexander, misnamed the Great, being on his death-bed, *parted his kingdom among such as were honourable and had been brought up with him from his youth, while he was yet alive.* Which statement contradicts all the historians who have recorded the last hours of 'Macedonia's madman.'

II. THE APOCRYPHAL BOOKS POSSESS NO EXTERNAL EVIDENCE TO PROCURE THEIR ADMISSION INTO THE SACRED CANON.

§ 1. *They were never received into the Sacred Canon by the ancient Jewish Church; and therefore they were not sanctioned, either by Jesus Christ or by his divinely inspired Apostles.*

To the Jews *were committed the oracles of God* (Rom. iii. 2.); which, as God's pledges, were preserved by them[1]: and according to the number of the Hebrew letters they were divided into twenty-two books, which number comprises the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures, now received by all the Reformed Churches, and no other books.

[i.] *That the Canon of the Old Testament Scriptures received by the Jews in the time of Jesus Christ, both in Egypt and in Palestine, was the same with that which we now have, and that the apocryphal books formed no part of that canon, is evident from the following facts:—*

(1.) Although the Alexandrine or Egyptian Jews differed in some respects from their brethren in Palestine (having their separate temple and priests at Leontopolis), yet they were not independent of the Palestine Jews. Their temple was constructed after the model of that at Jerusalem, and their worship was the same. In the first chapter of the second book of Maccabees there is an epistle from the Jews in Palestine to those in Egypt, inviting them to join them in celebrating the feast of the purification of the temple by Judas Maccabæus: and though the contents of this epistle are so fabulous and absurd that it never could have been written (as it pretends to be) by the great council of the Jews assembled at Jerusalem; yet it is worthy of notice, as it attests the *fact* that, at the time when that book was written, the Jews at Jerusalem recognised "the Jews that are throughout Egypt," as their "brethren," which they most assuredly would not have done, if the Alexandrine or Egyptian Jews had been guilty of schism. Indeed, these last wished to avoid a schism. We even read that they sent Philo to Jerusalem to offer sacrifice in the name of his fellow citizens[2]: but a formal schism would have been inevitable, if the Egyptian Jews had admitted and sanctioned a separate and distinct canon. It is evident that both the Palestine and the Egyptian Jews were solicitous to maintain entire accordance with each other.

(2.) The grandson of "Jesus the son of Sirach" translated his grandfather's Hebrew Proverbs into Greek during a residence in Egypt. In his "prologue" or preface, he speaks of "the law and the prophets, and the other books of the fathers;" and he acknowledges the inferiority of his own translation to the original, as was the case with regard to the original of the Law, the Prophets, and the other Books. By this declaration he makes no difference whatever between the Jewish and the Greek canons of Scripture: on the contrary, he recognises their identity. In fact, the son of Sirach everywhere "refers to the Scriptures, either by borrowing their phraseology, or by appealing to them, mostly in an indirect way, as the source of all true wisdom, virtue, piety, and happiness. The law is often the subject of reference, and is regarded as an authority in all matters. In

[1] "Factique sunt [Judæi] depositum et custodes eloquiorum Dei." Cardinal Tolet, Comment. in Rom. iii. 2.

[2] Eusebii Præparatio Evangelica, lib. viii. p. 234. Parisiis, 1544. fol. The same passage is also found in Dr. Mangey's Edition of Philo's Works, tom. ii. p. 646.

the eulogy of Wisdom (ch. xxiv.), there is a manifest and designed imitation of Prov. viii. In the *Eulogy of the Fathers* (xliv—l.), there is every where the most plain and manifest recognition of the authority, credibility, and excellence of the scriptural representations. The writer begins with Enoch, and follows the train of biblical history down to Nehemiah. He quotes the promises to Abraham. Moses was beloved of God, and to him commandment was given in respect to his people. Joshua was a follower of Moses in the *prophetic* office. Most of the kings of Judah sinned by forsaking the Law. Jeremiah was consecrated, while in his mother's womb, to the prophetic office. Ezekiel saw visions of glory, which were shown to him by him who rode upon the Cherubim. All the offerings and rites of the Levitical ritual are excellent and deserving of veneration; strong attachment to them, and particularity in the observance of them, is worthy of high commendation. This and the like matter in the book of the son of Sirach show, beyond the possibility of doubt, that with him the sacred books were τὸ πάνυ, the all in all."[1]

(3.) The testimony of Philo, an Alexandrine Jew of the sect of the Pharisees, to the genuineness and authenticity of the Old Testament having already been given in p. 42. of this volume, it may suffice to remark here that he is a most important witness in every thing relating to the religious convictions of his countrymen. He acknowledges the same threefold division of the Jewish Scriptures to which the son of Sirach, long before his time, had adverted; dividing the sacred Scriptures (τὰ ἱερὰ γραμμάτα) into 1. Νόμους, the Laws or Mosaic Writings; 2. Λογία θεσπισθέντα διὰ προφήτων, the divinely inspired oracles of the prophets; and 3. Ὕμνους καὶ τὰ ἄλλα, οἷς ἐπιστήμη καὶ εὐσέβεια συναύξονται καὶ τελειοῦνται, hymns of praise and other books, by which knowledge and piety are promoted and perfected.[2] It is evident that Philo was acquainted with the apocryphal books of the Old Testament, since he borrows phrases and expressions from them. But he has not expressly quoted any of them: much less does he allegorise upon them or make use of them to prove any point which he would establish.[3] No imaginable reason can be assigned for this neglect of them, excepting that, like Josephus (whose testimony is adduced in the next paragraph), he made a wide and broad distinction between inspired and other books. In fact, Philo has often quoted Plato, Philolaus, Solon, and other Greek philosophers with respect, while he never confers this honour on the apocryphal books.

(4.) Of all the testimonies of ancient writers concerning the inspired books of the Old Testament, the testimony of Josephus (who was contemporary with, but who wrote subsequently to Philo) is, unquestionably, the most remarkable and important. "We have not," he says, "an innumerable multitude [literally μυριαδες, *myriads*] of books among us disagreeing from and contradicting one another, but only *twenty-two books* containing the records of all past times, which are justly accredited. *Five* of them belong to Moses, which contain his laws, and the traditions concerning the origin of mankind, till his death. But as to the time from the death of Moses, till the reign of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, *the Prophets* who were after Moses committed to writing what was done in their times in *thirteen* books. The remaining *four* [books] contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life. Our history, indeed, has been written, since Artaxerxes, very particularly; *but it has not been esteemed of equal authority with the former by our forefathers, because there had not been an exact succession of prophets since that time.* And how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation, is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, *no one has been so bold as either to add any thing to them, to take any thing from them, or to make any change in them;* but it is become natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if it be necessary, willingly to die

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[1] Prof Stuart's Critical Hist. and Defence of the Old Testament Canon, p. 301. Andover, 1845. 8vo.

[2] Philonis Opera, tom. ii. p. 475. Edit. Mangey.

[3] Hornemann, Observationes ad illustrationem doctrinæ de canone Veteris Testamenti ex Philone, pp. 28, 29. Hauniæ, 1778. 8vo. In the index of passages from the Old Testament which are cited by Philo at the end of the second volume of Dr. Mangey's edition of his works, *not one* passage from the apocryphal books is to be found.

for them."[1] The canon of Old Testament Scripture recognised by Josephus, therefore, is as follows. I. *First* Class:—the Books of Moses. II. *Second* Class:—the Books of 1. Joshua; 2. Judges and Ruth; 3. the two Books of Samuel; 4. the two Books of Kings; 5. the two Books of Chronicles; 6. Daniel; 7. Ezra and Nehemiah; 8. Esther; 9. Job; 10. Isaiah; 11. Jeremiah and the Lamentations; 12. Ezekiel; 13. the twelve minor Prophets. III. The *Third* Class:—1. the Psalms; 2. Proverbs; 3. Ecclesiastes; 4. The Song of Solomon.

Hence it is evident that Josephus regarded all the books, which were written by the prophets prior to the time of Artaxerxes, as inspired writings. He closed the canon of the Old Testament with the time of Artaxerxes Longimanus: for he considered the book of Esther, which he supposed was written at that time, as the last of the Old Testament writings.[2] It is also to be observed, that Josephus expressly declares that the apocryphal books were "not esteemed of equal authority with the former" [that is, the inspired books], "because there had not been a succession of prophets" since the time of Artaxerxes Longimanus. The testimony of this learned Jew is of the highest authority: he evidently made great use of the Septuagint Greek Version; and he would doubtless have expressed himself more favourably with respect to the apocryphal books, if they had been recognised as sacred by the Hellenistic Jews of Alexandria. Thus it is evident that the canon of the Alexandrine Jews did not differ from that of the Jews of Palestine.

[ii.] As the apocryphal books were never received into the sacred canon by the ancient Jewish church, so *they were not sanctioned by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, nor by his divinely inspired apostles.*

From the observations already given in page 43. it will be seen that Jesus Christ "joined with the Jews in receiving what they received as Scripture; and therefore he joined with them also in *not* receiving what they did *not* receive as such. He therefore did not receive the Apocrypha as inspired."[3]

In fact, not a single passage of the apocryphal books is ever formally quoted by Jesus Christ or by his apostles.

According to the declarations of Jesus Christ, He is himself the fulfilment of Scripture: his whole life is a testimony to this truth. The Scriptures have been fulfilled in the smallest circumstances of his life: they form the basis of his instructions; and by them he confounded his enemies and comforted his disciples. On all these occasions it is worthy of observation, that Jesus makes use of the Old Testament canon, precisely as it was received by the Jews of his time, viz. as a depository of the divine revelations, without retrenching or cutting off any thing. He takes the Scriptures in their *entire*, and in his quotations he gives to them the following appellations; viz.:—1. Αἱ Γραφαὶ, *the Scriptures*, in Matt. xxi. 42. and xxii. 29., Mark xii. 24., and John v. 39. 2. Ἡ Γραφὴ, *the Scripture*, in John x. 35. and xvii. 12.;—an appellation this which means the whole of the Old Testament in the language of the Jews, especially in the Gospel of Saint John. 3. Ὁ Νόμος, *the Law*, in Matt. v. 18., Luke xvi. 17., and John x. 34. 4. Ὁ Νόμος καὶ Προφῆται, *the Law and the Prophets*, in Matt. xi. 13., and Luke xvi. 29. 31. 5. Οἱ Προφῆται, *the Prophets*, in Luke xviii. 31. And 6. in Luke xxiv. 44. Jesus declares that the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms bear witness of himself. *All things must be fulfilled concerning me, which are written in the* Law of Moses, *and the* Prophets, *and the* Psalms. In which words we have a distinct recognition of the threefold division of the Hebrew Scriptures, which (we have seen) was so expressly made by the son of Sirach, by Philo, and Josephus. "It is impossible to entertain any reasonable doubt of this, considering the time and circumstances in which the words were uttered. And as we have already ascertained what books were included in this division, we of course must regard this as an appeal to the Jewish canon, such as it *now* is," that is, exclusive of the apocryphal books. "On any other ground

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[1] Josephus contra Apion, l. i. §. 8. This testimony of Josephus is related by Eusebius. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. cc. 9 and 10.

[2] Antiq. l. xi. c. 6. § 1. The testimonies of the son of Sirach, of Philo, and of Josephus, of which only a concise (but it is hoped a comprehensive) view has been given above, are *fully* examined and with great ability by Prof. Stuart, pp. 301—312. and 223—249. of his Critical Hist. and Defence of the Old Testament Canon.

[3] Dr. Wordsworth's Hulsean Lectures on the Inspiration of Scripture, p. 52.

than a definite and well-known collection of sacred books, the disciples could not have understood their Master, nor [could] the Master have spoken with simplicity and in good faith." (*a*) Moreover, in the "Index Testimoniorum à Christo et Apostolis in Novo Testamento citatorum ex Veteri," at the end of the authorised Clementine editions of the Latin Vulgate printed at Rome in 1593, in quarto, "ex typographia Apostolico-Vaticana," and in 1598, "ex typographia Vaticano-Romana," in octavo, there is a list of some hundreds of quotations from the *Old Testament* in the New: but it is a remarkable and indisputable fact, that NOT ONE *single passage is adduced from the apocryphal books.* (*b*)

With regard to the APOSTLES, far from contradicting, they imitate the example of their Master, as we have seen in page 44. *suprà.* We find with them the same modes of designating Scripture. With them also, the *entire* canon of Scripture is a sacred book. Thus, in 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. we have αἱ Γραφαὶ, *the Scriptures*, which they call Ὁ Νόμος καὶ Προφῆται, *the Law and the Prophets*, in Acts xxiv. 14. and xxviii. 23.; Γραφαὶ Ἅγιαι, *the Holy Scriptures*, in Rom. i. 2.; and Ἱερὰ Γραμμάτα, *the Sacred Writings*, in 2 Tim. iii. 15. Which two last cited epithets indicate, — the former the relation of Scripture to God; and the latter, its relation to man and to divine worship. (*c*) As it refers to God, Scripture is Θεόπνευστος, divinely inspired, or given by inspiration of God (2 Tim. iii. 16. compared with 2 Pet. i. 21. and 1 Pet. i. 11, 12.); and, with regard to man, ἡ Παλαιὰ Διαθήκη, *the Old Covenant*, means the document of the covenant between God and man in 2 Cor. iii. 14.; in which passage the word ἀνάγνωσις, *reading*, indicates that the books of the Old Testament are intended. In 2 Kings xxiii. 2. (Sept.), Ecclus. xxiv. 23. (Gr.), and 1 Macc. i. 57. (Gr.) the phrase βίβλος διαθήκης, *book of the Covenant*, refers simply to the Law of Moses; but in 2 Cor. iii. 14. it refers to the whole of the Old Testament, as is evident by the contrast which Saint Paul has there drawn. (*d*)

In order to evade the irrefutable argument derived from the non-quotation of the apocryphal books by Jesus Christ or by his apostles, some advocates of the modern Church of Rome have affirmed (what indeed will they not affirm?) that the apocryphal books are cited by them; but with how little truth, the following tabular statement will demonstrate.

Texts.	Which are falsely asserted to be taken from the Apocryphal Books of	But which are really taken from, or are allusions to, the Greek Septuagint Version of
John vi. 31.	Wisd. xvi. 20. - - -	Ps. lxxvii. [Heb. lxxviii.] 24.
—— x. 22. -	1 Macc. iv. 59. (*e*) - - -	No passage of Canonical Scripture.
Rom. ii. 11. -	Wisd. vi. 7. - - - -	Deut. x. 17.
—— xi. 34.	—— ix. 13. - - - -	Isa. xl. 13.
—— xiii. 4.	—— vi. 3. - - - -	Prov. viii. 15.
1 Cor. x. 10. (*f*)	Judith vii. 25. (*Latin Version*)	Numb. xiv. and xvi.
Heb. i. 6. -	Wisd. vii. 26. - - -	Several passages of Scripture. (*g*)
—— xi. 5. -	—— iv. 10. - - - -	Gen. iv. 24.
—— xi. 35.	2 Macc. vi. and vii. (*h*) - -	No passage of Canonical Scripture.
James ii. 23. (*f*)	Judith viii. 22. (*Latin Version*)	Isa. xli. 8. and 2 Chron. xx. 7. (Heb.)
1 Pet. i. 24.	Ecclus. xiv. 17. (*i*) - - -	Isa. xl 6—8.

(*a*) Stuart's Hist. and Defence of the Old Testament Canon, p. 319.

(*b*) This "Index Testimoniorum" is reprinted in various subsequent editions of the Latin Vulgate, and especially in the accurate edition published at Frankfort on the Maine in 1826, "auctoritate summi pontificis Leonis XII. excusa."

(*c*) On the difference between the words ἱερὸς, *sacred*, and ἅγιος, *holy*, see Stephens's Thesaurus Græcus, vol. i. p. 320. Hase's edition. And for the expression ἱερὰ γραμμάτα, *sacred writings*, compare Josephus, Antiq. l. x. c. 10. § 4.

(*d*) On the modes of quotation from the Old Testament in the New, see the series of quotations and observations thereon, in Vol. II. pp. 113—207.

(*e*) "For the canonising of the Maccabees they produce St. John's testimony (x. 22.), *And it was at Jerusalem at the feast of the Dedication*, which (they say) referreth to 1 Macc. iv. 59. Yet, first, here is no place of that book quoted; and, secondly, they had a feast of Dedication instituted by Ezra, which might then be kept at Jerusalem. But be it understood of the feast that Judas Maccabæus and his brethren ordained for the sanctuary,

Thus it is evident from the accordance of the books of the Old Testament, quoted or referred to by the son of Sirach, by Philo, and by Josephus, and also in the New Testament, that the apocryphal books were never received into the sacred canon by the ancient Jewish Church, nor did they receive the sanction of Jesus Christ and his apostles; who never cited or referred to them, but made all their appeals exclusively to the divinely inspired Scriptures of the Old Testament. "All the books of the Old Testament, indeed, are not cited in the New, but we meet with references to most of them; and they are *all* recognised, as we have seen, under the general title of *the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms*. Is it credible, that, if the apocryphal books were inspired, not a sentiment should be transcribed,

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which Antiochus and his soldiers had profaned, the best that can be made of it is no more than specifying of a time which the Jews then observed, and whereat Christ took occasion to preach and to manifest his doctrine more publicly. But what makes this, either to the citing of the book, or to the adding of any canonical authority thereunto? The Jews are said to observe the feast of dedication at this day, and yet they do not acknowledge the book of Maccabees to be canonical Scripture, no more now than they did in St. John's time, who whether he referred to that Maccabæan dedication or no, is uncertain; but howsoever to this purpose he mentioned it not." Cosin's Scholast. Hist. of Canon, p. 27.

(*f*) "Both which passages" [1 Cor. x. 10. and James ii. 23.] "(if there were any credit to be given to Serrarius) are borrowed out of the eighth chapter of Judith (vii. 25. and viii. 22.), as we read them in the *Latin* paraphrase of that book; for in the *Greek* copies there is never a word like them to be found. But whom shall the Jesuit persuade, that the apostles quoted a Latin paraphrase which was not extant in their time? Or, if we should grant them that the Greek or the Chaldee copies had as much in them of old, as the Latin hath now, yet who would believe that St. Paul and St. James alluded rather to the book of Judith than to the book of Numbers (xiv. and xvi.), where they that were *destroyed by the destroyer* are upon record at large, and to the book of Genesis (xv. xvi.) where the story of Abraham is recited; together with the second book of Chronicles (xx. 7.), where Abraham is called the *Friend of God*, and the book of Isaiah (xli. 8.) where God himself saith of him *Abraham my friend*." Ibid. p. 25.

(*g*) "As it is not certain whether St. Paul ever saw that book of Wisdom or no, which for aught we know was not extant before his time, nor compiled by any other author than Philo the Hellenist Jew of Alexandria: so there be several expressions in the undoubted Scriptures, concerning the representation, the splendour, the wisdom, and the glory of God, whereunto he might allude in his Epistle to the Hebrews, as he had done before in his Epistle to the Colossians (i. 15, 16.), and in his second Epistle to the Corinthians (iv. 4.), setting forth Christ there to be *the image of the invisible God, and the first born of every creature, by whom all things were created and do still consist:* the substance and ground whereof may be found in Ezek. i. 28., Isa. ix. 6. and lx. 1., Psal. ii. 7. and cxxxvi. 5., 2 Sam. vii. 14., Jer. li. 15. and x. 12., to some of which places the apostle himself refers in this place to the Hebrews." (i. 5.) Ibid. p. 24.

(*h*) "Another argument [for the canonising of the Maccabees] they bring from St. Paul's catalogue of instances in his Epistle to the Hebrews, where among other sufferings that the saints endured he reckoneth up those that were tortured (Heb. xi. 35.); and though he nameth no person here in particular, yet Mons Du Perron, Serrarius, and Catharinus, applying this passage to the story of Eleazar and his seven brethren mentioned in the second book of Maccabees (vi. and vii.), are not only peremptory in it, that the apostle alludeth there to no other persons, but that he allegeth it as a part of canonical Scripture. Where, for the persons, the matter is not so sure; for other men are of another mind: and Paulus Burgensis understands not St. Paul here to have spoken of Eleazar and his brethren in the time of the Maccabees, but of the saints and martyrs of God, that have been tortured in his own time under the New Testament. And for the canonical authority of the book (if any book be here cited), whatever it was, the reference here made to it gave it no more authority of authentic Scripture, than the words immediately following gave to another received story among the Hebrews, that Isaiah the prophet was sawn asunder to death: whereunto, though the apostle might have reference, when he said (Heb. xi. 37.), *they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented;* yet who ever made all these instances before St. Paul wrote them, to be authentic or cononical Scripture? Or who can with reason deny, but that the story of Isaiah's death ought to be canonised, as well as the story of Eleazar and his seven brethren the Maccabees? seeing there is as much reason for the one as there can be given for the other." Ibid. pp. 27, 28.

(*i*) The only coincidence between 1 Pet. i. 24. and Ecclus. xiv. 17. is the occurrence in both passages, of the words πᾶσα σάρξ, *all flesh*.

nor a passage be produced, as an authority from any of them, in the Gospels or Epistles, and that not a single word should be found in all the New Testament from which it could be inferred that such books were in existence?"[1] Although some modern Romanists have thought proper to degrade the Hebrew canon, which (it has been shown) was received by the ancient Jewish church as well as by Jesus Christ and his apostles, by calling it "the canon of *the Scribes and Pharisees*,"[2] yet this contemptuous designation of it cannot alter the facts of the case. "This canon" (it has been truly observed)[3] "was the canon, and the *sole* canon of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Nor was any other canon of the Old Testament acknowledged by the apostles, though the Church of Rome pretends that the Latin canon was received from apostolic tradition."

§ 2. ***No Jewish writers, subsequent to the time of Jesus Christ, have cited the apocryphal books, as forming part of their canon of Scripture. On the contrary, many eminent Jewish writers have altogether rejected them.***

That the ancient and modern Jews received as canonical or divinely inspired writings, only those books of the Old Testament which are received by all Protestant Churches, is sufficiently attested by the agreement of all the manuscripts and printed editions. A different mode of enumeration occasioned by Ruth and the Lamentations of Jeremiah being reckoned as two books, is found in some catalogues of the books of the Old Testament. But whatever enumeration may be made, the same identical books are found in all copies, whether manuscript or printed.[4] The following sentiments of the (comparatively) modern Jews are collected from Hottinger's "Thesaurus Philologicus," from which learned work it will be seen that the apocryphal books are rejected by the more eminent Jewish rabbins.[5]

Rabbi Azariah says that "they" [that is, the apocryphal books] "are received by them [the Christians]" not by us.

Rabbi Gedaliah, after giving some account of the books of the Old Testament and of the authors of them, says:—"It is worth your while to know, that the nations of the world wrote many other books [which are contained] in their system of holy books, which are not in our hands." And he adds,—"they say that some are found in the Chaldee language, some in Arabic, others in Greek."

But the sentiments of the Jews will, perhaps, better appear from their opinions concerning particular apocryphal books.

(1.) *The Wisdom of Solomon.* Rabbi Azariah is of opinion that "if this book be not a translation, Solomon wrote it in the Syriac language, to send it to some king dwelling in the remotest parts of the East. But Ezra put his hand only to those books which were published in the holy language by the prophets under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Wherefore our wise men prudently and deliberately

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[1] Dick's Essay on the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, p. 70.

[2] Bp. Marsh's Comparative View of the Churches of England and Rome, p. 111.

[3] "Bishop Chaloner" (Dr. Marsh states) in the note prefixed to the first book of the Maccabees, says of these two books, "They are received by the church; who, in settling her canon of the Scriptures, chose rather to be directed by the tradition she had received from the apostles of Christ, than by that *of the Scribes and Pharisees.*" (Ibid. note 4.) This assertion of the titular bishop of Debra is reprinted verbatim in p. 890. of the stereotype edition of the Anglo-Romish Bible published at Dublin in 1825, with the Latin approbation of Dr. Daniel Murray, titular Romish archbishop of Dublin.

[4] The following is the arrangement in the Talmud, in the fifth or sixth century:—*The Law* or the five books of Moses.—*The Prophets*, Joshua and Judges, Samuel and Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah. The book of the Twelve [Minor Prophets].—*The Ketubim*, Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Ezra, and the Chronicles. Tract, Baba Bathra, fol. 14. col. 2. In the Masoretic copies, the greater prophets are thus arranged: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Twelve; and the Ketubim, thus:—Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel, Chronicles. Both make twenty-four books, but in a different order. Stuart on the Canon, p. 277.

[5] Hottingeri Thesaurus Philologicus, pp. 521—528. (Tiguri, 1649.) He has printed the original Hebrew of the Rabbinical authors whose opinions he has cited.

confirmed (or sanctioned) only those books which were established and confirmed by him. Rabbi Gedaliah ascribes this book to Philo;" though others say that Solomon was the author of it. It is the same which the Gentiles "[Christians]" have added to their Bibles.

(2.) *The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, called Ecclesiasticus*, is expressly reckoned in the Talmud among apocryphal books. "It is forbidden to read in the book of the son of Sirach." (Cod. Sanh. c. 11. in Gemar.) This prohibition is urged by Rabbi David Ganz, and by Rabbi Azariah. Of the more recent Jews, Manasseh ben Israel says, that "what is alleged to the contrary from a verse of Ecclesiasticus is nothing to the purpose, because that is an apocryphal book."

(3.) Of *Baruch*, Rabbi Azariah says, that "it is received by the Christians (or Nazarenes)" [meaning Papists], "but not by us."

(4.) *Of the Book of Tobit*, Rabbi D. Ganz in his Zemach David says: "Know, that the book of Tobit is one of those which the Christians join to the hagiographa." He afterwards states that this book is rejected by the Jews, and adds: "Know also that the book of Tobit, which among us is in the Hebrew tongue, was translated from Latin into Hebrew by Sebastian Munster."

(5.) Of the history of Susanna, Rabbi Gedaliah has expressed his opinion, when speaking of the other apocryphal books; and David Ganz says, that "the history of Susanna is received by the Christians, but not by us." The Jews in the time of Jerome entertained no other opinion of these books than those who came after them; for, in his preface to his translation of Daniel he states, "he heard a Jewish teacher deriding the history of Susanna, as being inserted by some Greek, but he knew not whom."[1]

If the Jews believed any or all of the apocryphal books to be canonical, they would give them a place in their sacred volume. *Unto them were committed the oracles of God* which they preserved with religious care and fidelity until the advent of Messiah, or the Lord Jesus Christ; by whom they were never charged with adding to, or subtracting from, the divinely inspired Scriptures of the Old Testament. And since their dispersion among all nations, copies of the Hebrew Bible (both manuscript and printed) have been dispersed over the civilised world; so that it has been and is morally impossible to produce a universal alteration in the canon. The apocryphal books have never been received by the Jews.

§ 3. *The Apocryphal Books were not admitted into the Canon of the divinely inspired Scriptures in any Catalogue of the Sacred Books, recognised by any Council of the ancient Christian Church, nor in any Catalogues published by the Fathers or ecclesiastical writers of the first four Centuries.*

This fact is proved not only by the positive testimonies of the fathers or ecclesiastical writers themselves; but also by the confessions of many authors of great note in the modern church of Rome.

(1.) *The Apocryphal Books were not admitted into the Canon of the divinely inspired Scriptures in any Catalogue of the Sacred Books, recognised by any Council whose decrees were generally or universally received by the ancient universal Church.*

The so-called council of Laodicea was a synod of bishops assembled from parts of Lydia and Phrygia A.D. 364, at Laodicea, in Phrygia Pacatiana, upon the river Lycus, for the revival of ecclesiastical discipline; and such was the estimation in which the decisions of that provincial synod were regarded, that by the second canon of the quinisextine general council, held A.D. 692, at Constantinople *in Trullo* [so called from the name of the place in which it was covened] the canons of the council of Laodicea were confirmed[2], and were received into the code of canons of the universal Church, and became universally obligatory. By the fifty-ninth Laodicean canon (Nos. 59, and 60., according to the Greek division, and 163, of the code of the universal Church), the following books are declared to be canonical.

"Private psalms" [or psalms composed by private men] "must not be read in the

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[1] Jerome, Prefat. ad Daniel. Opp. tom. i. p. 990.

[2] Canon 1. Labb. et Cossart, Concilia, tom. vi. col. 1136.

church, nor UNCANONICAL BOOKS, but only the CANONICAL [BOOKS] of the Old and New Testament. These are the books which ought to be read from the Old Testament. 1. [The] Genesis of the world; 2. Exodus out of Egypt; 3. Leviticus; 4. Numbers; 5. Deuteronomy; 6. Jesus Nave [or, Joshua the son of Nun]; 7. Judges, [and] Ruth; 8. Esther; 9. Of the kingdoms, first and second [books, that is, 1 and 2 Samuel]; 10. Of the kingdoms, third and fourth [books, or 1 and 2 Kings]; 11. Paralipomena [or, Chronicles] first and second [books]; 12. Ezra, first and second [that is, Ezra and Nehemiah]; 13. The book of Psalms, 150; 14. Proverbs of Solomon; 15. Ecclesiastes; 16. Song of Songs; 17. Job; 18. Twelve Prophets; 19. Isaiah; 20. Jeremiah and Baruch, Lamentations and Epistles; 21. Ezekiel; 22. Daniel."[1]

In this catalogue, it will be observed, that all the apocryphal books are omitted from the canon of inspired Scripture, except *Baruch* and *the Epistles* of *Jeremiah;* but though these words are in some copies, they are not in *all*.[2] But admitting that these words *are* genuine, by *Baruch* we are more probably to understand those passages of his which are comprised in the books of Jeremiah, written in Hebrew (for it is certain from Jer. xxxvi. that some of his predictions were written by Baruch); and not the book which now bears his name, and which was first written only in Greek: "a book so different in the present editions from the old Latin translation, that we have no assurance whether there be a true copy of it or no; and therefore, Jerome[3] would not meddle with it,"[4] or with the *epistle*, falsely bearing the name of Jeremiah, but which epistle (if genuine) may have been written by the prophet, since it is certain from Jer. xxix. that he did write letters to the Jews.

The fourth general council of Chalcedon, held A D. 451, under the Emperor Marcian, at which six hundred and thirty bishops were present, received the Code of canons of the universal Church, and by their first canon confirmed it; decreeing that "the canons of the holy fathers should be in full force, which have been set forth in every synod to this present time."[5] In that Code of the universal Church,

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[1] Can. 59. *Ὅτι οὐ δεῖ ἰδιωτικοὺς ψαλμοὺς λέγεσθαι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ οὐδὲ ἀκανόνιστα βιβλία, ἀλλὰ μόνα τὰ κανονικὰ τῆς καινῆς καὶ παλαιᾶς διαθήκης. Ὅσα δεῖ βιβλία ἀναγινώσκεσθαι τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης· α΄, Γένεσις κόσμου. β΄, Ἔξοδος ἐξ Αἰγύπτου. γ΄, Λευιτικόν. δ΄, Ἀριθμοί. ε΄, Δευτερονόμιον. ς΄, Ἰησοῦς Ναυῆ. ζ΄, Κριταί. Ῥούθ. η΄, Ἐσθήρ. θ΄, Βασιλειῶν α΄, β΄. ι΄, Βασιλειῶν γ΄, δ΄. ια΄, Παραλειπόμενα α΄, β΄. ιβ΄, Ἔσδρας, α΄, β΄. ιγ΄, βίβλος ψαλμῶν ρν΄. ιδ΄, Παροιμίαι Σαλομῶντος. ιε΄, Ἐκκλησιαστής. ις΄, Ἆσμα ᾀσμάτων. ιζ΄, Ἰώβ. ιη΄, Δώδεκα προφῆται. ιθ΄, Ἡσαΐας. κ΄, Ἱερεμίας καὶ Βαροὺχ, θρῆνοι καὶ ἐπιστολαί. κα΄, Ἰεζεκιήλ. κβ΄, Δανιήλ.* Beveregii Pandectæ Canonum, tom. i. p. 461. For a critical history of this canon of the council of Laodicea, the reader is necessarily referred to Mr. Westcott's History of the Canon of the New Testament, pp. 495—508.

[2] Mr. Perceval (Roman Schism illustrated, p. 41.) has printed the words "and Baruch, Lamentations and Epistles" in *italics;* "because it is doubtful whether they ought to be retained. The copy of the canons," he adds, "used by Aristenus has them not (see Beveridge's Pandect. i. 481.), nor that used by Isidore Mercator. (See Labbé and Cossart, i. 1521.) It is to be observed that many copies of these canons omit this list altogether: as that of Dionysius Exiguus (Labbé and Cossart, i. 1515); of John of Antioch (Bibl. Jur. Canon. Paris, 1661, ii. 600.); and the Epitome of Symeon. (Ibid. 731.)" Roman Schism, p. 56.

[3] Librum autem Baruch, qui apud Hebræos nec legitur nec habetur, prætermisimus. Hieronymi Præf. ad Jeremiam. (Op. tom. i. p. 354.)

[4] Cosin's Scholast. Hist. of Canon, p. 59.

[5] Concil. Chalcedon, can. 1. Labbé et Cossart, Concil., tom. iv. 479.

"By this canon the sanction and authority of a general council is given to the twenty-five canons of the council of Ancyra; the fourteen canons of Neo-cæsarea held about the same time; the twenty canons of Gangra, A. D. 340; the twenty-five canons of Antioch, A. D. 341; which, being added to the twenty canons of the Great Nicene council, form the beginning of that code, called by Justellus the *code of the universal Church;* to which the decrees of the general councils of Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, were afterwards added. This body of canon law was confirmed by the civil authority of the Roman empire under Justinian, who ordered that "the canons, edited or confirmed by the four general councils, should have the force of law." [Novel. 131. c. 1.] "This code is referred to by the fathers in their councils, as appears in the fourth action where

among others the canons of the council of Laodicea were comprised; "but the canons of the synod or council of Carthage" (see pp. 483, 484.) "had no place in it. We may therefore conclude that neither Pope Leo (whose legates subscribed the council of Chalcedon for him, all but the twenty-eighth canon," which gave the bishop of Constantinople equal precedency with the bishop of Rome) "nor any of the bishops there gathered together acknowledged any other books of canonical Scripture than what the council of Laodicea had declared to be received and read for such in the church before their time." [1]

The canons of the council of Laodicea continued to be received as obligatory for many ages; for Zonaras, a Greek commentator on the canons in the early part of the twelfth century, in commenting on the twenty-seventh canon of the council of Carthage, refers, among other authorities, to the council of Laodicea, in order to know what is to be read in the church, meaning the Eastern churches, among which he lived.[2]

In order to evade the positive evidence of the Laodicean council against the canonical authority of the apocryphal books, advocates of the modern Church of Rome have asserted that these books have the authority of two other ancient councils for their reception into the canon of Scripture. A brief examination, however, of their assertions will prove that they are utterly unfounded.

1. Cardinal Bellarmine affirms that the book of Judith had a singular testimony from the first general council of Nice or Nicæa (in Bithynia), held A.D. 325.[3]

To this assertion it is replied that *no* canon of the Nicene council (which council is recognised as a general council, equally by Protestants and Papists) has been found which ascribes canonicity to the apocryphal books. On the contrary, it is a matter of historical record that the heresy of Arius was condemned in the Nicene council solely by the evidence and authority of Scripture.[4] The conclusion of Lindanus, Bishop of Ruremond and one of the most strenuous assertors of papal doctrines, is unanswerable. "If," says he, "the Nicene council held the book of Judith with other books" (meaning the apocryphal books) "to be canonical, why was it omitted by the council of Laodicea which was held *eighty* (he should have said *forty*) years afterwards? But that the Nicene council determined nothing in this matter, I am induced to believe; because the sixth general council of Constantinople *in Trullo* approved the canon of Laodicea, which it never would have done, if the three hundred and eighteen most learned and holy Nicene fathers had either rejected or mutilated the canon of holy Scripture." [5]

2. But the principal authority of the Romish divines convened at Trent, for receiving the apocryphal books among the inspired books of Scripture, is found in the following forty-seventh canon of the third provincial council held at Carthage, A.D. 397.

Canon 47. "Moreover, it hath seemed good [to us], that, besides the canonical Scriptures, nothing be read in the church under the name of divine Scriptures. Now, the canonical Scriptures are these:—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Jesus Nave [or Joshua], Judges, Ruth, four books of the kingdoms, two books of Paralipomena [or Chronicles], Job, the Psalter of David, five books of

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the fifth of Antioch is cited verbatim (Labbé and Cossart, iv. 527.); and in the eleventh, action, where the sixteenth and seventeenth canons of Antioch are cited at length (ibid. 691.), as the ninety-fifth and ninety-sixth, which, if the number of canons of the councils above named be added together, they will be found to be." Perceval's Roman Schism pp. 52, 53.

[1] Cosin's Scholast. Hist. of Canon, p. 123.

[2] Beveregii Pandectæ Canonum, tom. ii. p. 549.

[3] "Librum Judith egregium testimonium habere a Synodo Nicæna prima, omnium Synodorum celeberrima, testatur Hieronymus, Præf. in Judith." De Verbo Dei, Lib. i. c. 12.

[4] Theodoriti Historia Ecclesiastica, lib. i. c. 7. pp. 26. 27. Cantabrigæ, 1720.

[5] Si Nicæna Synodus librum Judith (cum aliis) in canonem redegerat, cur annis octoginta post eum non accenset Synodus Nicæna? . . . . . . Verum nihil hac de re in concilio Nicæno fuisse definitum ut existimem, invitat, quòd hunc Laodicenum de Scripturis canoncis canonem, unà cum reliquis, Synodus Constantinopolitana VI. in Trullo approbavit; quod minimè videtur factura, si designatum a 318 illis patribus Nicenis, doctissimis juxta ac sanctissimis, Laodiceni aut non recepissent aut decurtassent Sacrarum Scripturarum canonem. Lindani Panoplia Evangelica, lib. iii. c. 3.

Solomon [that is, including the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach and Ecclesiasticus], the books of the Twelve Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Tobit, Judith, Esther, two books of Ezra, two books of the Maccabees." [The list of the books of the New Testament it is not necessary to recite.][1]

How little this canon makes in favour of admitting the apocryphal books into the collection of divinely inspired Scriptures, will be evident from the following considerations.

[i.] Though called a general council, the third council of Carthage was nothing more than a provincial synod of forty-four African bishops. Its authority, therefore, is very inconsiderable. In fact, the authority of the forty-seventh canon of this Carthaginian synod is not generally recognised by the advocates of the modern Church of Rome. Cardinal Baronius acknowledges, that "not all the canons enacted in this synod are allowed; but they are allowed in various other councils of Carthage, for instance, that canon in which the certain number of the sacred books is defined."[2] A similar acknowledgment is made by De la Bigne (or Binius), an editor of the Councils; who says that "the fifty canons were not all of them allowed in this synod, but were allowed, having been enacted in various other Carthaginian councils, and among them the nineteenth, thirtieth, and *forty-seventh*," which last is the canon in question.[3]

[ii.] Further, the proceedings of the third council of Carthage, as recorded in the collections of councils, are contradictory to ecclesiastical history: for "if" that "council were held under the consulate of Cæsarius and Atticus in the year 397 (as the inscription or title of that council in all copies is given us), there can be no such canon in it. For Boniface, to whom this canon referreth, was not at that time Pope of Rome, nor more than *twenty years* after. And if the canon next following there be true (which referreth to Pope Siricius), this canon that goes before it must needs be altogether false; for, between Siricius and Boniface, there were no less than *three* Popes, and *one and twenty years* distance. So that fixing this canon (about which Pope Boniface was to be consulted) upon the third council of Carthage (wherein order was taken to consult Pope Siricius) there is but little credit to be given to it."[4]

[iii.] Neither does the third council of Carthage possess that authority which the Romanists themselves pretend: for, when this council was urged against the head of their section of the universal Church, Cardinal Bellarmine replied that "this *provincial* council ought not to bind the Bishop of Rome, nor the bishops of other provinces."[5] If we oppose against it the council of Laodicea, which decreed these books to be apocryphal, Bellarmine affirms that "the council of Carthage is of greater authority than that of Laodicea because it is later, and because it was *national*, and because the council of Laodicea was provincial."[6] In the one case, when it seemingly makes *for* him, he terms it a *national* council; in the other, when it plainly makes against him, he terms it *provincial*.

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[1] "Item placuit, ut præter Scripturas canonicas nihil in ecclesiâ legatur sub nomine divinarum scripturarum. Sunt autem canonicæ Scripturæ: — Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numeri, Deuteronomium, Jesus Nave, Judicum, Ruth, Regnorum libri quatuor, Paralipomenon libri duo, Job, Psalterium Davidicum, Salomonis libri quinque, libri duodecim prophetarum, Isaias, Jeremias, Ezekiel, Daniel, Tobias, Judith, Esther, Esdræ libri duo, Machabæorum libri duo." Labbé et Cossart, Concilia, tom. ii. col. 1177.

[2] "Haud omnes canones in hac synodo sanciti probantur, sed diversis aliis conciliis Carthaginiensibus, ut inter alios ille, quo sacrorum librorum certus numerus definitur." Baronii Annales, anno 397. No. 56. tom. vi. p. 249. Lucæ, 1740.

[3] "Canones quinquaginta, quorum tituli hic assignantur, non omnes in hac synodo, sed diversis aliis conciliis Carthaginiensibus sanciti probantur." Binius in Concil. Carth. 3. Labbé et Cossart, Concil. tom. ii. col. 1182. D.

[4] Bp. Cosin's Scholast. Hist. of Canon, p. 112.

[5] "Nec enim concilium hoc" [scilicet, Carthaginiense III. can. 26.] provinciale Romanum pontificem, aut aliarum provinciarum episcopos, obligare poterat." De Romano Pontifice, lib. ii. c. 31. Disput. tom. i. col. 704. C. Coloniæ, 1619.

[6] "Concilium Carthaginiense esse majoris auctoritatis quam Laodicænum: tum quia posterius, tum etiam quia nationale fuit, episcoporum xliv." Bellarmin. Prima Controversia Generalis de Conciliis et Ecclesia Militante, lib. ii. c. 8. Disput. tom. ii. col. 69. D. 70. A.

[iv.] Although Augustine, bishop of Hippo, was one of the bishops present at the council of Carthage, and subscribed his name to its proceedings, yet his subscription to that council makes nothing in favour of the Tridentine canon of Scripture; for he did not allow the books of Judith, of Wisdom, of Ecclesiasticus, and the Maccabees to be canonical, all which were expressly decreed to be canonical by the third council of Carthage.[1]

It is true that there was an *ecclesiastical canon*, in which all or most of the books now read in our churches were anciently read "for example of life and instruction of manners," and therefore they were commonly called *canonical:* and in this manner Augustine, speaking of the books of Maccabees, says that "the church accounted these books to be canonical, which the Jews did not."[2] Again, there was a *divine* canon (*canon divinus*) which was held to be the rule of faith, in which were numbered only the twenty-two books of Scripture committed to the Jews; and this canon Augustine (or the author of the treatise De Mirabilibus Scripturæ, usually ascribed to him), who termed the books of Maccabees canonical, distinguishes from the ecclesiastical canon; and he illustrates his distinction by referring to the books of Maccabees.[3]

[v.] Lastly, the intermixture of apocryphal books with the divinely inspired books of Scripture, in the forty-seventh canon of the third council of Carthage, may be satisfactorily accounted for. In the manuscripts of the Septuagint Version there is the same intermixture of canonical and apocryphal books as in the manuscripts of the Latin Version; although variations sometimes occur in the particular arrangement of single books. "Now, this agreement between the Greek and the Latin Versions arose from the circumstance, that the old Latin Version of the Old Testament was nothing more than a translation of the Greek Version. Indeed, the Hebrew original was quite inaccessible to Latin translators in Europe and Africa during the three first centuries. In those ages the Jews themselves, who inhabited Greece, Italy, and Africa, read the Old Testament in the Greek Version. Thus, the Greek Bible became to the Latin Christians a kind of original, from which they derived their own translations of the Scriptures."[4] Accordingly, Augustine informs us that, in the primitive times, as soon as any one (to whom Latin was the vernacular language) obtained a Greek manuscript, and imagined that he knew a little of both languages, he attempted a translation of it.[5]

In the fifth century the Christian Church was inundated with disgraceful forgeries of sacred books, some of which even bore the names of Jesus Christ and his apostles. In order to check this abuse, Gelasius I. bishop of Rome is said to have convened a synod of seventy bishops at Rome (which by authors of the Romish communion is commonly termed the FIRST COUNCIL OF ROME), and to have drawn up a decree, in which, after declaring what books of the Old Testament were received by the Roman Church, a great number of apocryphal (or rather spurious) books was stripped of the reputation which they had hitherto so improperly enjoyed. This pretended decree has been urged by advocates of the modern Church of Rome in favour of the apocryphal books, which that section of the universal church has intermixed with the inspired books of the Old Testament; but with how little weight will appear from the subjoined statement of facts. The following is the

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[1] See the observations on the testimony of Augustine, in pp. 497—499. *infrà.*

[2] "Hos libros non Judæi sed ecclesia habet pro canonicis." De Civitate Dei, l. xviii. c. 36.

[3] In Machabæorum libris, etsi aliquid mirabilium numero inserendum conveniens fuisse ordini inveniatur, de hoc tamen nulla cura fatigabimur: nam tantum agere proposuimus, ut de *divini canonis* mirabilibus exiguam quamvis ingenioli nostri modulum existentem historicam expositionem ex parte aliqua tangeremus. De Mirabilibus Script. lib. iv. c. 33. (towards the end) Op. tom. iii. 752, 753. Basileæ, 1541.

[4] Bp. Marsh's Comparative View of the Churches of England and Rome, p. 99. and note. Third edition.

[5] "Qui enim Scripturas ex Hebræa lingua verterunt, numerari possunt: Latini autem interpretes, nullo modo. Ut enim cuique, primis fidei temporibus, in manus venit codex Græcus, et aliquantulum facultatis sibi utriusque linguæ habere videbatur, ausus est interpretari." De Doctrina Christ. lib. ii. c. 11. Op. tom. iii. Part 1. p. 26.

catalogue of books of the Old Testament contained in the decree which bears the name of Gelasius.[1]

"Genesis, one book. Exodus, one book. Leviticus, one book. Numbers, one book. Deuteronomy, one book. Joshua, the son of Nun, one book. Ruth, one book. Four books of the Kingdoms. Two books of Paralipomena [or Chronicles]. One hundred and fifty Psalms, one book. Three books of Solomon, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. Also, Wisdom, one book. Ecclesiasticus, one book. Also, the order of the Prophets. Isaiah, one book. Jeremiah, one book. Cinoth, that is, his Lamentations. Ezekiel, one book. Hosea, one book. Amos, one book. Micah, one book. Obadiah, one book. Jonah, one book. Nahum, one book. Habakkuk, one book. Zephaniah, one book. Haggai, one book. Zechariah, one book. Malachi, one book. Also, the order of the histories. Job, one book. Esdras, one book. Esther, one book. Judith, one book. Maccabees, one book."

"In the preceding catalogue it will be observed, that the apocryphal books are enumerated as part of the canon of Scripture; but, in truth, the decree bearing the name of Gelasius, wherein they are so enumerated, is of no better authority than the spurious writings which it subsequently condemned. For, not to dwell on the fact, that it exhibits the judgment of only one church, viz. that at Rome, and not the judgment of all the then existing Christian churches,—not only does this decree subsequently mention some books which were not extant in the time of Gelasius, and contain sentiments and arguments that savour of a latter age, but it is not quoted by any writer *before* the ninth century. 'This decree' (Bishop Cosin remarks) 'was first heard of when Isidore' [surnamed Mercator, or] 'the merchant began first to vent his apocryphal wares to the world, and when Gelasius had been already three hundred years in his grave. From him Burchard (anno 1014), and Ivo (anno 1117) received it; and Gratian (anno 1150) from them all.[2] But in the copies which they bring us out of the pretended original, there is so great an uncertainty and disagreement betwixt them, that the Roman emendators[3] of Gratian themselves know not how to trust it. For, in some copies they can find neither the book of Judith, nor the second book of Maccabees; in others they have but one book of the Kings, and one of the Chronicles; sometimes three, and sometimes two, and otherwhiles five of Solomon; so that no man can tell what Gelasius herein said, if he said any thing at all. But let it be, that some such catalogue was digested in his time; all that is gained by it against us is as good as nothing; for it is but a catalogue of *ecclesiastical* books mixed with the canonical. And the title of it[4] bears no more than we usually give it ourselves; to signify, that these were the books which were written in the time *of the Old Testament*, and afterwards received by the church, to be publicly read unto the people; though, in a strict and exact manner of speaking, we intend not to call them all alike canonical, no more [any more] than Gelasius and his bishops did.'[5] The testimony, therefore, which Romanists attempt to draw from this pretended Roman synod, in favour of the apocryphal books of the Old Testament, is of no effect whatever. Melchior Canus has asserted that the apocryphal books were delivered to the church, as sacred, by the *council of Florence*, as well as by those of Carthage and of Trent[6]; and Carranza, in his summary of councils, has printed a decree purporting to be made by the council of

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[1] Labbé et Cossart, Concil. tom. iv. col. 1260, 1261.

[2] Gratiani Decretum. Dist. 15. c. "Sancta Romana."

[3] "Emendatores Romani, in notis ad eundem canonem, verb. Mandamus. Ac certe in toto hoc capite tot modis discrepant collectiones ab originali, ut satis certò statui non possit, *quæ vera et pura sit Gelasii lectio:* nec magnopere sit mirandum, si nonnulla sint quæ difficultatem faciunt. Item, ad verb. Cæterum. Hinc usque ad finem" [ubi recensentur libri Scripturæ canonici et ecclesiastici iisdem immixti,] "neque in collectione Isidori, neque in ullo veteri codice Gratiani eorum quæ collata sunt, inveniuntur." Cosin, Scholast. Hist. of Canon. p. 123. *note g.*

[4] "Ordo *librorum Veteris Testamenti*, quem sancta et catholica Romana suscipit et veneratur ecclesia, digestus à beato Gelasio papa I. cum septuaginta episcopis." Labbé et Cossart, Concil. tom. iv. col. 1260.

[5] Cosin, Hist. of Canon, pp. 123, 124

[6] "Concilium Carthaginiense, *Florentinum* et Tridentinum, hos libros tanquam sacros ecclesiæ tradiderunt." Cani Loci Communes, lib. ii. c. 11. sect. Ad tertium.

Florence, in which the apocryphal books are recited as part of the canon of Scripture, and as being written by holy men of God, as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit.[1] *No such decree, however, is to be found in any of the collections of councils* which have hitherto been published." "Most likely, Carranza had it from some impostor or other, that made this decree of his own head, when there was no copy of the council to be found, that had the like."[2] Moreover, the so-called council of Florence was not an œcumenical or general council: at the time it held its deliberation for procuring a union with the Greek church, there was a rival council sitting at Basle, which deposed Eugenius IV. from the Papacy. The pretended decree of the council of Florence therefore has no valid existence.

(2.) *Proofs from the Fathers of the Christian Church, or the Ecclesiastical Writers of the first four Centuries, that the Apocryphal Books were* NOT *admitted into the Canon of divinely inspired Scripture.*

In their assemblies for public worship the first Christians read the Old and New Testaments and no other books. Justin the martyr (who wrote about sixty years after the death of St. John), describing their ordinary worship in Palestine, says: "On the day which is called Sunday, there is an assembly in one place of all who dwell either in towns or in the country; and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read as long as the time permits."[3] The memoirs of the apostles here evidently mean the four Gospels; and the writings of the prophets mean the Old Testament, and no other books or writings; and it is a remarkable fact that Justin himself has never cited the apocryphal books, although some of his notions might often be confirmed by quotations from them.[4] Clement, bishop of Rome, and a fellow-labourer with St Paul (Phil. iv. 3.), is equally silent concerning the apocryphal books. He exhorts the Corinthians to "look into the HOLY SCRIPTURES, which are the true words of the Holy Spirit. Ye know" (he adds) that "nothing unjust or counterfeit is written in them."[5]

The fathers of the ancient oriental churches were the first who felt the necessity of obtaining more accurate information concerning the Jewish canon of the Old Testament Scriptures; and several of them have left on record catalogues of the canonical or inspired books, which are of great importance in proving that the apo-

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[1] Septimo decernimus: Unum atque eundem Deum Veteris ac Novi Testamenti, hoc est, legis et prophetarum et evangelii, profitemur authorem. Quoniam, eodem Spiritu inspirante, utriusque testamenti sancti locuti sunt: quorum libros suscipit et veneratur ecclesia, qui titulis sequentibus continentur. Quinque Moysi, id est, Genesi, Exodo, etc., the catalogue corresponding with that of the council of Carthage, already given in p. 482. Carranzæ Summa Conciliorum, p. 270. Paris, 1550, 8vo.

[2] Bp. Cosin's Scholast. Hist. of Canon, p. 186. In pp. 183—188., he has given a full account of the council of Florence.

[3] Apol. i. c. 87.

[4] Zastrau, Dissertatio de Justini Martyris Studiis Biblicis, p. 25. Wratislaviæ, 1831.

[5] Epistle to the Corinthians, § 45. Some Romanists have asserted that Clement recognised the canonicity of the apocryphal book of Judith in the reference which he makes in § 55. of this epistle to her exposure of herself to danger for the love she bore to her country and to her people who were besieged. But that passage, it has long since been remarked, is an interpolation of a later and unskilful hand, from the fourth book of the Stromata of Clemens Alexandrinus, who wrote one hundred years after Clement, bishop of the Church at Rome. "Confer" (says Dr. Bernard) "Clementem Alexandrinum, p. 521. [C. D. Coloniæ, 1688], et constabit illo aliquem juniorem inde hæc quæ hîc legis deformasse, nec id quidem perite." (Patres Apostolici, ed. Cotelerii et Clerici, tom. i. p. 179. note 5.) But, admitting that this passage is genuine instead of being interpolated, the reference to the history of Judith after like examples of generous devotedness to the welfare of their country, exhibited by heathens, no more proves that to be a canonical book of Scripture, than St. Paul's quotations from Aratus or Cleanthes (Acts xvii. 29.), from Menander, who probably derived it from Euripides (1 Cor. xv. 33.), or from Epimenides (Tit. i. 12.), prove the writings of those heathen poets to be canonical. The quotations or allusions of private individuals are not public regulations, nor are they the opinion of the universal Church. A book may be cited without its becoming canonical on that account.

cryphal books formed no part whatever of that canon. In thus exhibiting the judgment of the primitive churches, we might now first "produce the canons of the apostles, so called; which, though it be no convincing argument of itself," (since those canons were never written by the apostles of Jesus Christ, but are the productions of some unknown compiler of the third [or perhaps even of the fourth][1] century, who falsely ascribed them to the apostles,) "yet it is" [a convincing argument] "to the adversaries unto this truth, who do so confidently affirm the apostles themselves to be the authors of them. For these very canons do number the books of the Old Testament after the same manner that we do, differing in nothing but the three books of Maccabees, and leaving out Ezra. But all the other books, which some would now bring in as canonical, they left out as apocryphal."[2] Throwing the catalogue of the pseudo-apostolic canons, therefore, into a note[3], let us now examine the catalogues of the sacred books, which have been framed by the most eminent fathers of the first four centuries.

(1.) After the apostles, MELITO was one of the earliest Bishops of *the church in Sardis* (Rev. iii. 1.) in Lydia, a distinguished writer, and of great influence among the Christians. Towards the close of the second century, he took a journey into Palestine, for the express purpose of obtaining accurate information concerning the books of the Old Testament, of which he made a catalogue and selections for the information of his friend Onesimus; who had requested a selection to be made for him from the law and the prophets concerning our Saviour and the whole of our faith. Melito communicated the result of his inquiries to Onesimus, in a letter preserved by the ecclesiastical historian Eusebius, in which we have the following catalogue of the books of the Old Testament, received by the common consent of all.

"Departing therefore into the East, and having arrived at the place where these

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[1] See p. 71. note 1. *suprà*, for a notice of the pseudo-apostolic canons.

[2] Bishop Beveridge's Works, vol. ix. pp. 221, 222. (London, 1824.) On the sixth article.

[3] Apost. Can. 85. "Let every one, both clergymen and laymen, have by him the venerable and Holy Bible, viz. The Old Testament, containing the five Books of Moses; one of Jesus [Joshua] the son of Nave [Nun]; one of the Judges; one of Ruth; four of the Kingdoms; two of the Paralipomena [Chronicles]; two of Esdras; one of Esther; [three of Maccabees]; one of Job; one hundred and fifty Psalms; three of Solomon, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs; twelve of the [lesser] Prophets; one of Isaiah; one of Jeremiah; one of Daniel; one of Ezekiel. But out of [the Bible — ἔξωθεν, that is not belonging to it], let it be remembered that novices be taught the Wisdom of Sirach." (Beveregii Pandectæ Canonum, tom. i. p. 56.)

On this pseudo-apostolical canon it has been observed that, as the church of Rome in ancient times did not receive the thirty-five last canons, so the modern church of Rome has greater reason still to reject and oppose them, especially for the sake of this canon, which not only permits but enjoins the laity the use of the Holy Scripture; and further, because the books of the Old Testament here rehearsed are those only which are received as canonical by us whom she calls heretics; for all the apocryphal books are omitted; Ecclesiasticus being especially noticed as without, or forming no part of the canonical books. "It is true [that] the book of Judith is mentioned in Cotelerius's edition, and *three books of Maccabees*" [are mentioned] "both in his copy and that of Bishop Beveridge. But Cotelerius, though a papist, frankly avows that Judith is mentioned only in one old manuscript, and omitted in all the rest: and he observes that Zonaras (an oriental canonist of the twelfth century) expressly bears witness that the book of Judith is not contained in the apostolic catalogue. (Patres Apostolici, tom. i. p. 452.)" With regard to the "*three books of Maccabees*," there is every reason to believe that these words are an interpolation; as "they are omitted in the most ancient transcript that is anywhere extant,—that of Joannes Antiochenus: and it is owned that, in the age in which he lived (the seventh century), the Greek church had not received the Maccabees into their canon of Scripture; which they certainly would have done, had they been mentioned in this canon; which they believe to have been framed by the apostles themselves. Dupin ingeniously owns, that the canon here mentioned is agreeable to that of Melito" (No. (1.) given above), "and to that of the Hebrews, and consequently to ours." (Johnson's Clergyman's Vade Mecum: containing the canonical codes of the primitive and universal church, &c., vol. ii. pp. 38, 39. Gibbins's Roman Forgeries and Falsifications, Part I. p. 113. Dublin, 1844. 8vo.)

things" [the transactions recorded in Scripture] "were proclaimed and done, I accurately learned the books of the Old Testament, which I have arranged and sent unto thee. The names are as follows: Of Moses five" [books], "Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. Jesus Nave" [Joshua the son of Nun], "Judges, Ruth, four" [books] "of Kings, two of Paralipomena" [or Chronicles]. "The Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon (also called Wisdom), Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, Job. Of the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, and twelve in one book, Daniel, Ezekiel, Esdras. From these I have made selections, dividing them into twelve books."[1]

This testimony of Melito is very valuable, from the care and labour which he bestowed in order to procure accurate information. Although the number of books is the same, yet the Jewish mode of reckoning them varied. Melito appears to have considered the three books of Esther, Ezra, and Nehemiah as forming only one, from their intimate connection, and from their immediately following in order, according to the ancient arrangement of the Jews.[2] The objection of Romanists, that by "the Proverbs of Solomon (also called Wisdom)," *Σαλομῶνος Παροιμίαι ἣ καὶ Σοφία*, the apocryphal book of Wisdom is intended by Melito, is utterly groundless. Rufinus, translating these words of Melito as recorded by Eusebius, renders them *Salomonis Proverbia, quæ et Sapientia;* thus making Wisdom to be synonymous with Proverbs, two names of the same book; and Eusebius himself has elsewhere said that not only Hegesippus, but also "Irenæus and the whole company of the ancients, called the Proverbs of Solomon *πανάρετον σοφίαν*, wisdom comprehending every virtue."[3] "Melito means, then, merely to say, that the work of Solomon, called *παροιμίαι*, had also the name of *σοφία*. The pronoun ἣ also imports this. We cannot alter the accentuation and make it an article; for to a title of a book the article does not in such a case belong."[4]

(2.) The next testimony of the Oriental Church is that of Origen (A. D. 230), who was for more than twenty years a catechist of the church at Alexandria in Egypt, and afterwards a presbyter of the church at Cæsarea, and who was held in the highest esteem for his learning and piety. Eusebius[5] informs us that Origen, in his exposition of the first psalm, has given a catalogue of the books of the sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament, describing them in the following manner.

"We must not be ignorant that there are twenty-two books in the covenant, as the Hebrews have handed them down; which is the number of letters in their alphabet." Then, after some remarks, he adds:—"Moreover the twenty-two books according to the Hebrews are these:—That intituled Genesis by us, but by the Hebrews Breesith, from the beginning of the book, which means, in the beginning. Exodus, Oualesmoth, which means *these are the names*. Leviticus, Ouikra, *and he called*. Numbers, Ammesphekodim, Deuteronomy, Elle haddebarim *these* [are] *the words*. Jesus the son of Nave, Josue ben Noun [or Nun]. Judges [and] Ruth, with them in one [book], Sophetim. Of Kings, the first [and] second, with them one [book], Samuel, the called of God. The third [and] fourth of Kings, in one [book], Ouammelech David, which means the reign of David. The first [and] second [book] of Paralipomena, in one, Dibre Acamin, which means the words of days [or records of the times]. Ezra first and second, in one; Ezra, which means helper. The Book of Psalms, Sepher Thillim. The Proverbs of Solomon, Misloth. Ecclesiastes, Koheleth. The Song of Songs, Sir Hassirim. Isaiah, Jesaia. Jeremiah with Lamentations and the epistle in one, Jeremiah. Daniel, Daniel. Ezekiel,

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[1] *Ἀνελθὼν οὖν εἰς τὴν ἀνατολὴν, καὶ ἕως τοῦ τόπου γενόμενος ἔνθα ἐκηρύχθη καὶ ἐπράχθη, καὶ ἀκριβῶς μαθὼν τὰ τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης βιβλία, ὑποτάξας ἔπεμψά σοι· ὧν ἔστι τά ὀνόματα· Μωϋσέως πέντε· Γένεσις, Ἔξοδος, Λευϊτικὸν, Ἀριθμοὶ, Δευτερονόμιον· Ἰησοῦς Ναυῆ, Κριταὶ, Ῥοὺθ, Βασιλειῶν τέσσαρα, Παραλειπομένον δύο· Ψαλμῶν Δαβὶδ, Σολομῶνος Παροιμίαι ἣ καὶ Σοφία, Ἐκκλησιαστὴς, Ἆσμα ᾀσμάτων, Ἰὼβ, Προφητῶν, Ἡσαΐου, Ἱερεμίου, τῶν δώδεκα ἐν μονοβίβλῳ, Δανιὴλ, Ἰεζεκιὴλ, Ἔσδρας· ἐξ ὧν καὶ τὰς ἐκλογὰς ἐποιησάμην, εἰς ἓξ βιβλία διελών.* Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. l. iv. c. 26.

[2] Talmud. Baba Bathra, fol. 14. col. 2. Hævernick, Mélanges de Théologie Réformée, p. 233.

[3] Eusebius, Ecc. Hist. l. iv. c. 22. fine.

[4] Stuart's Hist. and Defence of the Canon, p. 259.

[5] Ecc. Hist. l. vi. c. 25.

Iezekiel. Job, Job. Esther, Esther. Besides these, there are the Maccabees which are inscribed Sarbeth, Sarbane El" [that is, probably, the History of the Princes of the sons of God].[1]

It will be observed that, in the preceding list, although Origen states that the books of Scripture are twenty-two in number, yet he gives the names of only twenty-one books, the twelve Minor Prophets (in one book, as always in ancient times) being omitted. But there can be no doubt that this is an error either of Eusebius himself, or more probably of some of his transcribers; since Rufinus's translation of Origen gives the missing book and restores the Minor Prophets to their proper place. It has been supposed that "the epistle," which Origen mentions in conjunction with "Jeremiah with Lamentations," means the apocryphal epistle of Baruch: but this is very doubtful. "Whoever reads Jer. xxxvi. xlv. will be satisfied, especially if he reflects on the disjointed condition in which the writings of this prophet formerly were, that the portion of Jeremiah's words, which were written down by Baruch, and on a separate roll, might occasion the mistake here supposed to be made in the enumeration."[2] "The Maccabees" are the only apocryphal books mentioned by Origen: and these he expressly excludes from the canonical books, saying that they are *without* (ἔξω) or besides them."

(3.) Athanasius, bishop or patriarch of the church at Alexandria (who flourished A. D. 326), borrowing the language of St. Luke at the commencement of his Gospel, prefaces his catalogue of the sacred books in the following terms,

"Forasmuch as there are some who have undertaken to compose for themselves books called APOCRYPHAL, and to mingle these with the inspired Scripture, respecting which we have been fully persuaded, as eye-witnesses and ministers of the word from the beginning have delivered to the fathers, it seemed good to me also, being exhorted thereto by my genuine brethren, and having made myself acquainted with the subject, to set forth from the beginning and in due order the CANONICAL BOOKS which have been delivered to us, and believed to be divine; so that every one, if he is led away by deceit, may learn well to know those who have seduced him, while he who remains pure may rejoice in having this admonition again repeated.

"All the books of the Old Testament, then, are TWENTY-TWO; as many, according to report, as the alphabetical letters of the Hebrews. In order and name they are thus: First the Genesis, then Exodus, next Leviticus, after this Numbers, and finally Deuteronomy. In the sequel of these are Joshua of Nun, and Judges, and after this Ruth; and then follow the four books of Kings, and of these the first and second are numbered as one, and the third and fourth likewise as one. After these is the book of Psalms, then Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs; then comes Job, and finally the Prophets. Twelve of these are reckoned as one book; then comes Isaiah, Jeremiah with Baruch and Lamentations and the Epistle, after these Ezekiel, and Daniel. Thus far are set forth the books of the Old Testament."[3]

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[1] "Οὐκ ἀγνοητέον δ' εἶναι τὰς ἐνδιαθήκους βίβλους, ὡς Ἑβραῖοι παραδιδόασιν, δύο καὶ εἴκοσι· ὅσος ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς στοιχείων ἐστίν." Εἶτα μετά τινα ἐπιφέρει λέγων· "Εἰσὶ δὲ αἱ εἴκοσι δύο βίβλοι καθ' Ἑβραίους αἵδε· ἡ παρ' ἡμῖν Γένεσις ἐπιγεγραμμένη, παρ' Ἑβραίοις δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς βίβλου, Βρησίθ, ὅπερ ἐστίν, ἐν ἀρχῇ· Ἔξοδος, Οὐελεσμὼθ, ὅπερ ἐστὶ, ταῦτα τὰ ὀνόματα· Λευιτικὸν, Οὐϊκρὰ καὶ ἐκάλεσεν· Ἀριθμοὶ, Ἀμμεσφεκωδείμ. Δευτερονόμιον, Ἐλεαδδεβαρείμ, οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι· Ἰησοῦς υἱὸς Ναυῆ, Ἰωσουὲ βὲν νοῦν. Κριταὶ, Ῥοὺθ, παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν ἑνὶ, Σαφατείμ. Βασιλειῶν πρώτη, δευτέρα, παρ' αὐτοῖς ἓν, Σαμουὴλ, ὁ θεόκλητος. Βασιλειῶν τρίτη, τετάρτη, ἐν ἑνὶ, Οὐαμμελὲχ Δαβὶδ, ὅπερ ἐστὶ βασιλεία Δαβίδ. Παραλειπομένων, πρώτη, δευτέρα, ἐν ἑνὶ, Διβρὴ ἀϊαμιμ, ὅπερ ἐστὶ λόγοι ἡμερῶν· Ἔσδρας, πρῶτος, δεύτερος, ἐν ἑνὶ, Ἐζρᾶ, ὅ ἐστι βοηθός. βίβλος Ψαλμῶν, Σφαρθελλείμ. Σολομῶντος παροιμίαι, Μελώθ. Ἐκκλησιαστὴς, Κωλέθ. Ἆσμα Ασμάτων, οὐ γὰρ, ὡς ὑπολαμβάνουσί τινες, Ἄσματα Ἀσμάτων, Σὶρ Ἀσσιρίμ. Ἡσαΐας, Ἰεσσιά. Ἱερεμίας σὺν Θρήνοις καὶ τῇ ἐπιστολῇ, ἐν ἑνὶ, Ἱερεμία. Δανιὴλ, Δανιήλ. Ἰεζεκιὴλ, Ἰεζεκιήλ. Ἰὼβ, Ἰώβ. Ἐσθὴρ, Ἐσθήρ. Ἔξω δὲ τούτων ἐστὶ τὰ Μακκαβαϊκὰ, ἅπερ ἐπιγέγραπται Σαρβὴθ Σαρβανὲ ἔλ." Eusebius, Ecc. Hist. l. vi. c. 25.

[2] Stuart's Hist. and Defence of the Canon, p. 264.

[3] Ἐπειδήπερ τινὲς ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι ἑαυτοῖς τὰ λεγόμενα ἀπόκρυφα, καὶ ἐπιμίξαι ταῦτα τῇ θεοπνεύστῳ γραφῇ, περὶ ἧς ἐπληφορήθημεν, καθὼς παρέδοσαν τοῖς πατράσιν οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου· ἔδοξεν κἀμοὶ προτραπέντι παρὰ γνησίων ἀδελφῶν, καὶ μαθόντι, ἄνωθεν ἑξῆς ἐκθέσθαι τὰ κανονιζόμενα καὶ παραδοθέντα πιστευθέντα τε θεῖα εἶναι βιβλία· ἵνα ἕκαστος εἰ μὲν ἠπατήθη, καταγνῷ τῶν πλανησάντων· ὁ δὲ καθαρὸς διαμείνας χαίρῃ πάλιν ὑπομιμνησκόμενος. ἔτι τοίνυν τῆς μὲν παλαιᾶς διαθήκης βιβλία τῷ ἀριθμῷ τὰ πάντα εἰκοσιδύο· τοσαῦτα γὰρ,

In the preceding list, it will be observed that the book of Esther is omitted, for what reason it is now impossible to ascertain; and that Ruth is reckoned as a distinct book.

"This remarkable passage," Prof. Stuart justly states, "places the books which we name *apocryphal*, in their position as estimated by the fathers in general. They might be *read* in order to enlarge our Christian knowledge of religious things; but they were merely subordinate and secondary. The *canonical* books were separated from them by a wide distinction."[1]

The catalogue of sacred books contained in the "Synopsis of Scripture" usually but erroneously ascribed to Athanasius, is throughout little else than a copy of the preceding list extracted from his festal epistle, so that it will suffice to add a short passage from it. The anonymous author commences his synopsis by saying, "All the Scripture of us Christians is divinely inspired: and it contains not an indefinite but rather a determined number of canonical books. And [those] of the Old Testament are these." Having mentioned their names, and given the first sentence in each book, the author adds:—"The canonical books of the Old Testament are twenty-two, according to the number of the Hebrew letters: but besides these there are other books of the same Old Testament, NOT CANONICAL, *and these are read only by catechumens*, viz. Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, Esther, Judith, Tobit. So many are the books of the Old Testament, [which are] NOT CANONICAL. Some of the antients have affirmed that Esther is canonical among the Hebrews; and also that Ruth is joined with Judges, and reckoned as one book. In this way they compute the full number of books to be twenty-two. These then are the canonical and uncanonical books of the Old Testament."[2]

So weighty is this testimony of the author of the Synopsis, that Canus (one of the most learned advocates of the modern church of Rome,) is constrained to admit that he was not only of our opinion, but also drew many theologians after him to this opinion.[3]

(4.) CYRIL, Bishop of Jerusalem, A. D. 345 or 350,) in his fourth catechetical discourse, thus instructs the catechumens:—"Read the divine Scripture, the twenty-two books of the Old Testament, which were translated by the seventy-two interpreters..... The first five books are of Moses, which is the *Law*—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; then comes Joshua of Nave; Judges with Ruth, numbered the seventh book; of the remaining historical books, first and second of the Kingdoms; one book among the Hebrews. One also is the third and fourth of the Kingdoms; with them also the Chronicles, first and second, are one book; the first and second of Ezra [Ezra and Nehemiah] are reckoned as one; the twelfth book is Esther; and these are the *Historical* ones. The *Poetical* books are five;

ὡς ἤκουσα, καὶ τὰ στοιχεῖα τὰ παρ' Ἑβραίοις εἶναι παραδέδοται. τῇ δὲ τάξει καὶ τῷ ὀνόματί ἐστιν ἕκαστον, οὕτως· πρῶτον Γένεσις, εἶτα Ἔξοδος, εἶτα Λευϊτικὸν, καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο Ἀριθμοὶ, καὶ λοιπὸν τὸ Δευτερονόμιον. ἑξῆς δὲ τούτοις ἐστὶν Ἰησοῦς ὁ τοῦ Ναυὴ, καὶ Κριταί. καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο ἡ Ῥοῦθ. καὶ πάλιν ἑξῆς Βασιλειῶν τέσσαρα βιβλία· καὶ τούτων τὸ μὲν πρῶτον καὶ δεύτερον εἰς ἓν βιβλίον ἀριθμεῖται· τὸ δὲ τρίτον καὶ τέταρτον ὁμοίως εἰς ἕν· μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα Παραλειπόμενα α' καὶ β', εἰς ἐν βιβλίον ἀριθμούμενα, εἶτα Ἔσδρας α' καὶ β', ὁμοίως εἰς ἓν, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα βίβλος Ψαλμῶν, καὶ ἑξῆς Παροιμίαι. εἶτα Ἐκκλησιαστὴς, καὶ Ἆισμα ᾀσμάτων. πρὸς τούτοις ἔστι καὶ Ἰὼβ, καὶ λοιπὸν προφῆται· οἱ μὲν δώδεκα εἰς ἓν βιβλίον ἀριθμούμενοι. εἶτα Ἡσαΐας, Ἱερεμίας, καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ Βαροὺχ, Θρῆνοι καὶ Ἐπιστολὴ, καὶ μετ' αὐτὸν Ἐζεκιὴλ καὶ Δανιήλ. ἄχρι τούτων τὰ τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης ἵσταται. Athanasii Opera, tom. i. p. 961. Ed. Benedict. Parisiis 1698.

[1] Stuart's Hist. and Defence of the Canon, pp. 442, 443.

[2] Πᾶσα γραφὴ ἡμῶν Χριστιανῶν θεόπνευστός ἐστιν, οὐκ ἀόριστα δὲ ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ὡρισμένα καὶ κεκανονισμένα ἔχει τὰ βιβλία καὶ ἐστὶ τῆς μὲν παλαιᾶς διαθήκης ταῦτα. . . . . Ὁμοῦ τὰ κανονιζόμενα τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης βιβλία εἴκοσι δύο, ἰσάριθμα τοῖς στοιχείοις τῶν Ἑβραίων. Ἐκτὸς δὲ τούτων εἰσὶ πάλιν ἕτερα βιβλία τῆς αὐτῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης, οὐ κανονιζόμενα μὲν, ἀναγιγνωσκόμενα δὲ μόνον τοῖς κατηχουμένοις ταῦτα· Σοφία Σαλομῶντος, Σοφία Ἰησοῦ υἱοῦ Σιρὰχ, Ἐσθὴρ, Ἰουδὴθ, Τωβίτ. Τοσαῦτα καὶ τὰ μὴ κανονιζόμενα, τινὲς μέντοι τῶν παλαιῶν εἰρήκασι κανονίζεσθαι παρ' Ἑβραίοις καὶ τὴν Ἐσθὴρ, καὶ τὴν μὲν Ῥοὺθ μετὰ τῶν Κριτῶν ἑνουμένην εἰς ἓν βιβλίον ἀριθμεῖσθαι, τὴν δὲ Ἐσθὴρ εἰς ἕτερον ἓν, καὶ οὕτω πάλιν εἰς εἴκοσι δύο συμπληροῦσθαι τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῶν κανονιζομένων παρ' αὐτοῖς βιβλίων. Καὶ τὰ μὲν τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης βιβλία τά τὰ κανονίζομενα καὶ τὰ μὴ κανονιζόμενα τοιαῦτα καὶ τοσαῦτα. Synopsis sacræ Scripturæ, in Athanasii Opera. tom. ii. p. 126.

[3] "Non ab hac sententia fuit alienus Damascenus et Athanasius, quos theologi multi secuti sunt." Cani Loci Theologici, lib. ii. c. 10.

viz. Job, the book of Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs, the seventeenth book. To these must be added five *Prophetic* ones; the twelve prophets, one book; one also of Isaiah; of Jeremiah with Baruch, Lamentations, and the epistle; then Ezekiel; and Daniel, the twenty-second book of the Old Testament."[1]

Although the books are somewhat differently arranged from the order which appears in our English Bibles, yet the books are the same; excepting that Baruch is added to Jeremiah. But this may be accounted for, by understanding those parts of Jeremiah's predictions in the writing of which Baruch was concerned: for if we understand Cyril as referring to the separate apocryphal book, now called Baruch, the number of twenty-two canonical books will be exceeded. "Now, if any shall affirm that nevertheless there are other canonical books besides these, Cyril will refute him with this splendid objurgation[2]: . . . 'Who art thou, that thou shouldest make these books canonical? The apostles, the ancient bishops, the governors of the church were much wiser than thou art, who have commanded those books alone to us as canonical, and no others.' "

(5.) Hilary, Bishop of Poictiers (A. D. 350), exhibits the consent of the Latin or Western Church with the Oriental or Greek Churches in the fourth century. In his prologue or preface to the Psalms, he says that "the reason why the Law of the Old Testament is divided into twenty-books, is, that they may agree with the number of letters. Which [books], according to the traditions of the ancients, are thus reckoned. Of Moses there are five books; Jesus Nave [is] the sixth; Judges and Ruth, the seventh; the first and second of the Kingdoms [1 and 2 Samuel], the eighth; the third and fourth of the Kingdoms [1 and 2 Kings], the ninth; the two books of Paralipomena [Chronicles], the tenth; Ezra, the eleventh; Psalms, the twelfth; the Proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, [and] Song of Songs, the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth; the Twelve Prophets, the sixteenth; then Isaiah, and Jeremiah with the Lamentations, and the Epistle, Daniel, Ezekiel, Job, and Esther, make up the number of twenty-two books. To some, however, it seems good to add Tobit and Judith, and thus reckon twenty-four books, according to the number of the Greek Letters."[3]

This catalogue agrees very closely with that of Origen; and though *some* persons thought proper to add the apocryphal books of Tobit and Judith, yet it is evident that such was not the practice of the Western Church generally in the time of Hilary, nor does he express any approbation of such addition. His testimony is so clear concerning the books which were then deemed canonical or inspired, that Cardinal Bellarmine could not except against it, and therefore he classes Hilary among those ancients who followed the Hebrew Canon of the Old Testament[4], to

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[1] Ἀναγίνωσκε τὰς θείας γραφὰς, τὰς εἴκοσι δύο βίβλους τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης, ταύτας τὰς ὑπὸ τῶν ἑβδομήκοντα δύο ἑρμηνευθείσας· . . . Τοῦ Νόμου μὲν γάρ εἰσιν αἱ Μωσέως πρῶται πέντε βίβλοι, Γένεσις, Ἔξοδος, Λευϊτικὸν, Ἀριθμοὶ, Δευτερονόμιον· ἑξῆς δὲ Ἰησοῦς υἱὸς Ναυῆ, καὶ τὸ τῶν Κριτῶν μετὰ τῆς Ῥοὺθ, βιβλίον ἕβδομον ἀριθμούμενον. Τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν ἱστορικῶν βιβλίων ἡ πρώτη καὶ ἡ δευτέρα τῶν Βασιλειῶν, μία παρ' Ἑβραίοις ἐστὶ βίβλος, μία δὲ καὶ ἡ τρίτη καὶ τετάρτη, ὁμοίως δὲ παρ' αὐτοῖς καὶ τῶν Παραλειπομένων ἡ πρώτη καὶ ἡ δευτέρα μία τυγχάνει βίβλος, καὶ τοῦ Ἔσδρα ἡ πρώτη καὶ ἡ δευτέρα μία λελόγισται· δωδεκάτη βίβλος ἡ Ἐσθήρ. καὶ τὰ μὲν ἱστορικὰ ταῦτα· τὰ δὲ στιχηρὰ τυγχάνει πέντε, Ἰὼβ, καὶ Βίβλος Ψαλμῶν, καὶ Παροιμίαι, καὶ Ἐκκλησιαστὴς, καὶ Ἆισμα ᾀσμάτων, ἑπτακαιδέκατον βιβλίον. ἐπὶ τούτοις δὲ προφητικὰ πέντε· τῶν δώδεκα προφητῶν μία βίβλος, καὶ Ἠσαΐου μία, καὶ Ἱερεμίου μία, μετὰ Βαροὺχ, καὶ Θρήνων καὶ Ἐπιστολῆς, εἶτα Ἰεζεκιὴλ, καὶ ἡ τοῦ Δανιὴλ, εἰκοσιδευτέρα βίβλος τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης. Cyril, Catech. iv. c. 33. p. 67. Parisiis.

[2] Whitaker's Disputation on Scripture, translated by Mr. Fitzgerald, p. 58.

[3] Et ea caussa est, vt in viginti duos libros lex Testamenti Veteris deputetur, ut cum literarum numero convenirent. Qui ita secundum traditiones veterum deputantur, ut Mosis sint libri quinque; Jesu Naue sextus; Iudicum et Ruth septimus; primus et secundus Regnorum in octauum, tertius et quartus in nonum, Paralipomenon duo in decimum sint, sermones dierum; Esdræ in vndecimum; liber Psalmorum in duodecimum; Salomonis Proverbia, Ecclesiastes, Canticum Canticorum in tertium decimum, et quartum decimum, et quintum decimum; Duodecim autem Prophetæ in sextum decimum; Esaias deinde et Ieremias cum lamentatione et Epistola; Sed et Daniel, et Ezechiel, et Iob, et Hester, viginti et duum librorum numerum consumment. Quibusdam autem visum est, additis Tobia et Iudith viginti quatuor libros secundum numerum græcarum literarum connumerare." Hilarii Opera, p. 9. Parisiis, 1693, fol.

[4] "Multi veterum, ut Melito, Epiphanius, Hilarius, &c. in canone Veteris Testamenti

which (as he himself admits) they acknowledged that none of the controverted books belong.[1]

(6.) EPIPHANIUS, a native of Palestine, who was chosen bishop of Constantia in the island of Cyprus (A. D. 368), has spoken of the Books of the Old Testament in three different parts of his writings; one of these it will be sufficient to adduce, from which it will appear that he neither adds one more to the sacred canon, nor subtracts from it one more than we do: — "Now the Jews had these prophets and books of prophets until the return from the Babylonish captivity. 1. Genesis. 2. Exodus. 3. Leviticus. 4. Numbers. 5. Deuteronomy. 6. The book of Jesus the son of Nave. 7. The book of Judges. 8. Ruth. 9. Job. 10. The Psalter. 11. The Proverbs of Solomon. 12. Ecclesiastes. 13. The Song of Songs. 14. The first [book] of the Kingdoms. 15. The second [book] of the Kingdoms. 16. The third [book] of the Kingdoms. 17. The fourth [book] of the Kingdoms. 18. The first [book] of Paralipomena [Chronicles]. 19. The second [book] of Paralipomena. 20. The book of the Twelve Prophets. 21. The Prophet Isaiah. 22. The Prophet Jeremiah with the Lamentations and his Epistles and Baruch. 23. The Prophet Ezekiel. 24. The Prophet Daniel. 25. The first [book] of Esdras. 26. The second book. 27. The book of Esther. And these are the twenty-seven books, which were given by God to the Jews; though they are reckoned only twenty-two according to the letters of the Hebrew Alphabet; ten of the books which are double being reduced to five.......There are also two other books, which are doubtful, the Wisdom of Sirach, and of Solomon, besides certain other books which are apocryphal."[2]

(7.) GREGORY, Bishop of Nazianzum (A. D. 370), in his thirty-third poem thus enumerates the several books of the Old Testament: — "All the historical books are twelve, of the most ancient Hebrew wisdom. First Genesis, then Exodus, and Leviticus, then Numbers, then Deuteronomy. Then Joshua, and Judges; Ruth is the eighth; the ninth and tenth books are the acts of Kings; then Chronicles; the last is Ezra. There are five books in metre; the first of which is Job, then David [Psalms], three belong to Solomon, viz. Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Proverbs. In like manner there are five of the prophetic Spirit; twelve of these are comprised in one, viz. Hosea, Amos, Micah, then Joel, Jonah, Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi; these make one. The second is Isaiah, then Jeremiah who was called from the womb, Ezekiel, and the grace of Daniel. I have exhibited twenty-two books, corresponding with the twenty-two letters of the Hebrews."[3] After enumerating the books of the New Testa-

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exponendo, secuti sunt Hebræos, non Græcos. Bellarmin. de Verbo Dei, l. i. c. 20. col. 67. A.

[1] Ibid. l. i. c. 10. col. 31. B. "Hi libri simul omnes (Tobiæ, Judith, Sapientiæ, Ecclesiastici, et Maccabæorum) rejiciuntur ab Hebræis."

[2] Ἔσχον δὲ οὗτοι οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἄχρι τῆς ἀπὸ Βαβυλῶνος αἰχμαλωσίας ἐπανόδου βίβλους τε καὶ προφήτας τούτους, καὶ προφητῶν βίβλους ταύτας. Πρώτην μὲν Γένεσιν, δευτέραν δὲ Ἔξοδον, τρίτην Λευϊτικὸν, τετάρτην Ἀριθμοὺς, πέμπτην Δευτερονόμιον, ἕκτην βίβλον Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Ναυὴ, ἑβδόμην τῶν Κριτῶν, ὀγδόην τῆς Ῥοὺθ, ἐννάτην τοῦ Ἰὼβ, δεκάτην τὸ Ψαλτήριον, ἑνδεκάτην Παροιμίας Σαλομῶντος, δυοδεκαιδεκάτην Ἐκκλησιαστὴν, τρισκαιδεκάτην τὸ Ἆισμα τῶν ᾀσμάτων, τεσσαρεσκαιδεκάτην πρώτην Βασιλειῶν πεντεκαιδεκάτην δευτέραν Βασιλειῶν ἑκκαιδεκάτην τρίτην Βασιλειῶν ἑπτακαιδεκάτην τετάρτην Βασιλειῶν, ὀκτωκαιδεκάτην πρώτην Παραλειπομένων, ἐννεακαιδεκάτην δευτέραν Παραλειπομένων, εἰκοστὴν πρώτην Ἡσαΐαν τὸν Προφήτην, εἰκοστὴν δευτέραν τὸν Προφήτην Ἱερεμίαν, μετὰ τῶν Θρήνων καὶ Ἐπιστολῶν αὐτοῦ τε καὶ τοῦ Βαροὺχ, εἰκοστὴν τρίτην Ἰεζεκιὴλ τὸν Προφήτην, εἰκοστὴν τετάρτην Δανιὴλ τὸν Προφήτην, εἰκοστὴν πέμπτην τὸ πρῶτον βιβλίον τοῦ Ἐσδρὰ, εἰκοστὴν ἕκτην τὸ δεύτερον βιβλίον, εἰκοστὴν ἑβδόμην τὸ βιβλίον Ἐσθήρ. Καὶ αὗταί εἰσιν αἱ εἰκοσιεπτὰ βίβλοι αἱ ἐκ Θεοῦ δοθεῖσαι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· εἰκοσιδύο δὲ ὡς τὰ παρ' αὐτοῖς στοιχεῖα τῶν Ἑβραικῶν γραμμάτων ἀριθμούμεναι διὰ τὸ διπλοῦσθαι δέκα βίβλους εἰς πέντε λεγομένας· . . . . εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ ἄλλαι δύο βίβλοι παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν ἀμφιλέκτῳ, ἡ Σοφία τοῦ Σιρὰχ, καὶ ἡ τοῦ Σαλομῶντος, χωρὶς ἄλλων τινῶν βιβλίων ἐναποκρύφων Epiphanius adversus Hæres. pp. 18, 19. Coloniæ, 1682.

[3]
Ἱστορικαὶ μὲν ἔασι βίβλοι δυοκαίδεκα πᾶσαι,
Τῆς ἀρχαιοτέρας Ἑβραικῆς σοφίης.
Πρώτιστα Γένεσις, Ἔξοδος, Λευϊτικὸν,
Ἔπειτ' Ἀριθμοί, κᾆτα δεύτερος Νόμος.
Ἔπειτ' Ἰησοῦς, καὶ κριταί· Ῥοὺθ ὀγδόη·
Ἡ δ' ἐννάτη δεκάτη τε βίβλοι, πράξεις Βασιλήων,
Καὶ τὰ Παραλειπόμεν'· ἔσχατον δ' Ἔσδραν ἔχεις.

ment, Gregory adds, "If there are any besides, they are NOT among the genuine [books]."[1]

(8.) AMPHILOCHIUS, Bishop of Iconium (A. D. 380), writing to his friend Seleucus, gives a catalogue in Greek verse of the canonical books, so closely agreeing with that of Gregory Nazianzum, that it is not necessary to be repeated. Only he states that to these some add Esther: and after enumerating the books of the New Testament, he adds, "Let this be the most certain canon of the divinely inspired Scriptures."[2]

We now turn to the Fathers or Ecclesiastical Writers of the Latin or Western Church.

(9.) Of all the ecclesiastical fathers of that Church, who have given catalogues of the inspired books of Scripture, JEROME (who lived in the fourth century) is the most eminent. He perceived the necessity of having recourse to the Jews, in order to discover the true canon of the Old Testament, and that *that* would be the only means of ascertaining what books the New Testament confirmed as canonical. His exact studies of the original language of the Old Testament, his frequent conversations with the most learned rabbis of his time, and his indefatigable zeal for attaining the object which he had in view, are all well known. No father of the Church, before or after Jerome, perceived the truth concerning the canon of the Old Testament with so much clearness and precision. His sentiments on this subject are developed in his "Prologus Galeatus," or general preface concerning all the Books of the Old Testament; which was written about A.D. 392, and was prefixed by him to his Latin version of the Books of Samuel and Kings from the Hebrew.

Having stated that the Hebrews have twenty-two letters, and as many books of

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Αἱ δὲ στιχηραί πέντε, πρῶτος ὢν Ἰώβ,
Ἔπειτα Δαυίδ, εἶτα τρεῖς Σολομώντιαι,
Ἐκκλησιαστὴς, Ἆισμα καὶ Παροιμίαι.
Καὶ πένθ᾽ ὁμοίως πνεύματος προφητικοῦ·
Μίαν μέν εἰσιν ἐς γραφὴν οἱ δώδεκα,
Ὡσηέ, κ᾽ Ἀμῶς, καὶ Μιχαίας ὁ τρίτος,
Επειτ᾽ Ἰωὴλ, εἶτ᾽ Ἰωνᾶς, Ἀβδίας,
Ναούμ τε, κ᾽ Ἀββακούμ τε, χὠ Σοφωνίας,
Ἀγγαῖος, εἶτα Ζαχαρίας, Μαλαχίας·
Μίαν μὲν οἶδε. Δευτέρα δ᾽ Ἡσαΐας,
Ἔπειθ᾽ ὁ κληθεὶς Ἱερεμίας ἐκ βρέφους,
Εἶτ᾽ Ἰεζεκιὴλ, καὶ Δανιήλου χάρις.
Ἀρχαίας μὲν ἔθηκα δύω καὶ εἴκοσι βίβλους,
Τοῖς τῶν Ἑβραίων γράμμασιν ἀντιθέτους.

Greg. Naz Opera, tom. ii. p. 98.

[1] Contemporary with Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzum, was EPHREM the Syrian, a deacon of the Christian church at Edessa, of whose works a complete edition was published by Dr. Assemanni at Rome, 1732—47, in Syriac and Latin, and Greek and Latin. Although Ephrem has left no catalogue of the sacred books, yet from his other Syriac writings it would appear that he (and consequently the ancient Syrian church) had the same canon of the Old Testament which the Jews had, and which we have. The first volume of his Syrian and Latin works "contains Ephrem's Commentaries upon the five books of Moses, and upon Joshua, the Judges, the two books of Samuel, and the two books of the Kings: and in the second volume of the Syriac works are Commentaries upon Job, Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Zechariah, and Malachi. Ebedjesu" [a learned Syrian writer in the latter part of the thirteenth century] "in his catalogue (apud Assemanni Bibliotheca Orientalis, tom. iii. p. 61, 62.) enumerates Ephrem's Commentaries upon most or all the books of the Old Testament, particularly Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the twelve Prophets. He says nothing of any Commentaries of Ephrem upon any book of the Old Testament after those: which" (the accurate Dr. Lardner remarks) "makes me think that Ephrem's canon of the Old Testament was the same with that of the Jews. Moreover, in his Syriac works still remaining, he has several times expressly called Malachi the last of the Prophets. And Assemanni owns (Bib. Or. tom. ii. Syr. p. 94. C. D., and p. 315. C), that, in his Commentary upon the book of Daniel, Ephrem takes no notice of the Song of the Three Children, or of the Stories of Susanna or Bel and the Dragon. Though Ephrem commented upon the book of Jeremiah's Lamentations, there does not appear any commentary of his upon Baruch. . . . . Ephrem esteemed Malachi the last of the Prophets; therefore he admitted no later writings into the canon of the Old Testament." Lardner's Credibility, Part ii. ch. 102. § II., Works, vol. ii. p. 481. 4to edit.

[2] . . . . *κανὼν ἂν εἴη τῶν θεοπνεύστων Γραφῶν.* Amphiloch. Ep. ad Seleucum, in Greg. Naz. Op. tom. ii. p. 134.

divine doctrine for the instruction of mankind, which he divides into three classes, Jerome proceeds to enumerate the canonical books of the Old Testament in the following terms:[1]

"The first book is called by them *Bresith*, which we call Genesis. The second, *Veelle Semoth*" [or Exodus]. The third *Vajecra*, that is, Leviticus. The fourth *Vajedabbar*, which we call Numbers. The fifth *Elle Addebarim*, or Deuteronomy. These are the five books of Moses which they call *Thorah*, that is, the Law.

"The second [class] contains the Prophets; and they begin from Jesus the son of Nave, who with them is called Josue Ben Nun. The next is *Sophetim*, that is, the Book of Judges, with which they join Ruth, because her history happened in the times of the Judges. The third is Samuel, which we call the first and second book of Kings. The fourth is *Malachim*, that is, the Kings, or the third and fourth book of Kings. And it is much better to say Malachim, that is, Kings, than *Malachoth*, that is, Kingdoms, because they do not contain the history of many nations, but of the people of Israel only, consisting of twelve tribes. The fifth is Isaiah; the sixth, Jeremiah; the seventh, Ezekiel; the eighth, the book of the Twelve Prophets, which they call *Thare Asra*.

"The third class is that of the Hagiographa" [or sacred writings], "the first of which is Job; the second, David, of which they make one volume called the Psalms, divided into five parts. The third is Solomon, containing three books, — Proverbs, which they call *Masaloth* or Parables; the fourth, Ecclesiastes or *Coheleth;* the fifth, the Song of Songs, by them entitled *Sir hassirim*, the sixth is Daniel. The seventh, *Dibre hajamim*, that is, the Words of Days (by which appellation we may more significantly term the Chronicle of the whole sacred history), which book is by us called the first and second of the Paralipomena [or Remains]. The eighth is Ezra; which, among the Greeks and Latins, is divided into two books. The ninth is Esther.

"Thus, in all, there are twenty-two books of the Old Law; that is, five books of Moses; eight of the Prophets, and nine of the Hagiographa. Though some[2] reckon Ruth and *Cinoth*" [or Lamentations] "among the Hagiographa, and thus make the number twenty-four.

"This prologue may serve as a helmeted introduction to all the books of

[1] "Primus apud eos liber vocatur *Beresith*, quem nos Genesin dicimus. Secundus *Veelle Semoth*. Tertius *Vajicra*, id est Leviticus. Quartus *Vajedabber*, quem Numeros vocamus Quintus *Elle haddebarim*, qui Deuteronomium prænotatur. Hi sunt quinque libri Mosis, quos proprie Thora, id est Legem, appellant."

"Secundum Prophetarum ordinem faciunt, et incipiunt ab Jesu filio Nave, qui apud eos *Josua Ben Nun* dicitur. Deinde subtexunt Sophetim, id est Judicum librum, et in eumdem compingunt Ruth, quia in diebus Judicum facta ejus narratur historia. Tertius sequitur Samuel, quem nos Regum primum et secundum dicimus. Quartus *Malachim*, id est Regum, qui tertio et quarto Regum volumine continetur. Meliusque multo est *Malachim*, id est Regum, quam *Malachoth*, id est Regnorum, dicere: non enim multarum gentium describit regna, sed unius Israelitici populi, qui tribubus duodecim continetur. Quintus est Esaias. Sextus Jeremias. Septimus Ezechiel. Octavus liber duodecim Prophetarum, qui apud illos vocatur *Thereasar*.

"Tertius ordo Ἁγιόγραφα possidet. Et primus liber incipit ab Job. Secundus a David, quem quinque incisionibus et uno Psalmorum volumine comprehendunt. Tertius est Solomon, tres libros habens, Proverbia, quæ illi *Misle*, id est Parabolas, appellant: Ecclesiasten, id est *Coheleth:* Canticum Canticorum, quem titulo *Sir Assirim* prænotant. Sextus est Daniel. Septimus *Dibre hajammim*, id est Verba dierum, quod significantius Χρονικὸν totius divinæ historiæ possumus appellare, qui liber apud nos Παραλειπομένων primus et secundus inscribitur. Octavus Ezras, qui et ipse similiter apud Græcos et Latinos in duos libros divisus est. Nonus Esther.

"Atque ita fiunt pariter Veteris Legis libri viginti duo, id est, Mosis quinque, et Prophetarum octo: Hagiographorum novem. Quanquam nonnulli Ruth et Cinoth inter Ἁγιόγραφα scriptitent, et hos libros in suo putent numero supputandos; ac per hoc esse priscæ Legis libros viginti quatuor. . . . .

"Hic prologus scripturarum quasi galeatum principium omnibus libris, quos de Hebræo vertimus in Latinum, convenire potest: ut scire valeamus, quicquid extra hos est, inter Ἀπόκρυφα esse ponendum. Igitur Sapientia, quæ vulgo Salomonis inscribitur, et Jesu filii Sirach liber, et Judith, Tobias, et Pastor, non sunt in Canone. Macchabæorum primum librum hebraicum reperi. Secundus græcus est, quod ex ipsa quoque phrasi probari potest." Hieronymi Prologus Galeatus, op. tom. i. pp. 317—322. Parisiis, 1693.

[2] As the Masorites and Talmudists.

Scripture, which we have translated from Hebrew into Latin: so that we may be able to know, that whatever is beyond these, is to be put among the apocryphal books. Therefore, Wisdom, which is commonly called Solomon's, and the Book of Jesus the Son of Sirach, and Tobit, and the Shepherd *are* NOT in the canon. The first book of Maccabees I have found in Hebrew; the second is Greek, as is evident from its phraseology."

In the preceding catalogue of the canonical or inspired books, Jerome has given them just as they stand in our English Bibles, excepting that he has designated some of them by their Hebrew names; that is, he has given the canon recognised by all Protestant churches, not the canon made by the modern church of Rome on the 8th of April, in the year 1546, that is only eleven hundred and fifty-four years after the time of Jerome. In other parts of his biblical labours, Jerome has expressed his deliberate judgment respecting the apocryphal Books in equally explicit terms.[1]

Thus, in the preface to his Latin version of the books of Solomon from the Hebrew, he says that he has translated only "three books of Solomon, — Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher, and the Song of Songs. There is also the book of Jesus the Son of Sirach, and a pseudepigraphal" (or falsely ascribed) "book, called the Wisdom of Solomon; the former of which I have found in Hebrew, and called not Ecclesiasticus (as it is by the Latins) but the Parables; to which were joined Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs, that the collection might the better resemble the books of Solomon, both in number and subject-matter. The second is not at all to be found among the Hebrews; and the style plainly shows that it is of Greek original; and some ancient writers affirm that it is the work of Philo the Jew. As therefore the Church reads the Books of Judith, and Tobit, and of the Maccabees, but DOES NOT RECEIVE THEM AMONG THE CANONICAL SCRIPTURES; so likewise it may read these two books" [that is, Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon], "but *not for establishing the authority of ecclesiastical dogmas*."[2]

In his preface to Jeremiah he further says that the Book of Baruch the Scribe of Jeremiah is not read in Hebrew, nor received by the Hebrews; wherefore he passed it over.[3] In his preface to Daniel he states, that that book had neither the history of Susanna, nor the Song of the Three Children, nor the fables of Bel and the Dragon[4]:

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[1] It is a remarkable fact, that though the apocryphal and inspired books were intermingled at a very early period, yet, in all the ancient manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate, we find in close connexion with the apocryphal books, those prefaces of Jerome in which the apocryphal writings are rejected. (Hody, de Bibliorum Textibus Originalibus, p. 662.) In all the earlier printed editions of the Latin Bible, Dr. Hody adds, the same prologues (or prefaces) are found. (Ibid.) Subsequently to the reformation, however, a new form was introduced, and these scriptural barriers were removed; at first cautiously and rarely; then, after the decree of the so-called council of Trent, more freely and frequently; and at length, under papal sanction, boldly and almost universally, in order to advance the credit of the apocryphal books, and to obtain for them the estimation of inspired writings. The proofs of these facts are given by the Rev. G. C. Gorham, in pp. 51—73. of Dr. Leander van Ess's "Two Letters" addressed to him, with his "Reply." London, 1826. 8vo.

[2] ". . . . . tridui opus nomini vestro consecravi, interpretationem videlicet trium Salomonis voluminum; *Masloth*, quas Hebræi *Parabolas*, vulgata autem editio *Proverbia* vocat: *Coeleth*, quam Græce Ecclesiasten, Latine Concionatorem, possumus dicere; *Sir Assirim*, quod in nostrâ linguâ vertitur Canticum Canticorum. Fertur et Πανάρετος, Jesu filii Sirach liber, et alius Ψευδεπίγραφος, qui Sapientia Salomonis inscribitur. Quorum priorem Hebraicum reperi, non Ecclesiasticum, ut apud Latinos, sed Parabolas prænotatum, cui juncti erant Ecclesiastes et Canticum Canticorum; ut similitudinem Salomonis, non solum librorum numero, sed etiam materiarum genere, coæquaret. Secundus apud Hebræos nusquam est, quia et ipse stylus Græcam eloquentiam redolet; et nonnulli scriptorum veterum hunc esse Judæi Philonis affirmant. Sicut ergo Judith, et Tobi[æ], et Machabæorum libros legit quidem Ecclesia, sed INTER CANONICAS SCRIPTURAS NON RECIPIT, sic et hæc duo volumina legat ad ædificationem plebis, non ad auctoritatem ecclesiasticorum dogmatum confirmandam." Præf. in libros Salomonis, Op. tom. i. pp. 938, 939.

[3] "Librum autem Baruch, notarii ejus, qui apud Hebræos nec legitur nec habetur, prætermisimus." Præfatio in Jeremiam, Op. tom. i. p. 554. Parisiis, 1693.

[4] "Qui [scil. liber Danielis] apud Hebræos nec Susannæ habet historiam, nec Hymnum trium Puerorum, nec Belis Draconisque fabulas." Præfatio in Daniel., Op. tom. i. p. 990.

and in his prefaces to the books of Tobit[1] and of Judith[2], he characterises them as apocryphal and not received by the Jews.

Further: "in the very text of the Vulgate Jerome notes with the most scrupulous care every apocryphal addition to the sacred text: and had the Latin church but heeded the teachings of her great master on this subject, her Bible would never have been contaminated by its spurious excrescences; nor would the fathers of the Council of Trent have made a decision alike discreditable to their reputation as scholars, and their integrity and sincerity as Christians." [3]

(10.) RUFINUS, a presbyter of Aquileia, who was at first the friend and afterwards the bitter enemy of Jerome (A. D. 390 or 397) in his exposition of the Apostles' Creed, having cited 2 Tim. iii. 16. says:—"It therefore seems proper in this place to enumerate the books of the Old and New Testament, which according to the tradition of our ancestors are believed to have been inspired by the Holy Spirit himself, as we have received them from the monuments of the fathers. Of the Old Testament therefore in the first place there have been delivered the five books of Moses,—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. After these [are] Jesus Nave [Joshua the son of Nun], and Judges together with Ruth. Next are the four books of the Kingdoms, which the Hebrews reckon two. The Remains, which are called the Book of Days [or Chronicles], and two books of Ezra [that is, Ezra and Nehemiah] which they reckon as one, and Esther. Moreover, of the prophets [there are] Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel: besides, one book of the twelve Prophets. Job also and the Psalms of David are distinct books. But Solomon delivered three books to the Church,—Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs. With these they concluded the books of the Old Testament." [4]

After giving a catalogue of the books of the New Testament, Rufinus adds:—"These are the books which the fathers have included in the canon, and out of which they would establish the assertions of our faith. It ought, however, to be known, that there are also other books which are not canonical, but which have been called *ecclesisatical* by our ancestors; as the Wisdom of Solomon, and another which is called the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach; and among the Latins is called by the name of Ecclesiasticus; by which name is denoted not the author, but the quality of the book. Of the same rank is the little book of Tobit, and Judith, and the books of Maccabees..... All which indeed they would have to be read in churches, but not to be alleged by way of authority for confirming articles of faith. *Other scriptures they called* APOCRYPHAL, *which they would* NOT *have to be read in churches.* These things I have thought proper to put down here, as received from our ancestors, for the information of those who are learning the first elements of the church and of the faith, that they may know from what fountains they ought to draw the word of God." [5] It is impossible for any thing to be more discriminating or decisive than this catalogue of Rufinus.

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[1] Addressing the Bishops Chromatius and Heliodorus, he says:—"Mirari non desino exactionis vestræ instantiam: exigitis enim ut Librum Chaldæo sermone conscriptum ad Latinum stylum traham: librum utique Tobiæ, quem Hebræi de catalogo Divinarum Scripturarum secantes, his, quæ Apocrypha memorant, manciparunt." Præfatio in Librum Tobiæ, Op. tom. i. p. 1158.

[2] Apud Hebræos liber Judith inter Apocrypha legitur; cujus auctoritas ad roboranda illa, quæ in contentionem veniunt, minus idonea judicatur." Præfatio in librum Judith, Op. tom. i. p. 1170.

[3] Prof. Stowe on the Apocryphal Books. Bibliotheca Sacra for April, 1854, p. 304.

[4] "Et ideo, quæ sunt Novi ac Veteris Testamenti volumina, quæ secundum majorem traditionem per ipsum Spiritum Sanctum inspirata creduntur et ecclesiis Christi tradita, competens videtur hoc in loco evidenti numero, sicut ex patrum monumentis accepimus, designare. Itaque Veteris Testamenti omnium primo Moysi quinque libri sunt traditi,—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numerus, Deuteronomium. Post hæc Jesus Nave, et Judicum, simul cum Ruth. Quatuor post hæc Regnorum libri, quos Hebræi duos numerant Paralipomena, qui Dierum dicitur Liber, et Esdræ duo, quia apud illos singuli computantur, et Hester. Prophetarum vero Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel, et Daniel. Præterea duodecim prophetarum liber unus. Job quoque et Psalmi David singuli sunt libri. Solomon vero tres ecclesiæ tradidit, Proverbia, Ecclesiasten, et Cantica Canticorum. In his concluserunt numerum librorum Veteris Testamenti." Rufini Expositio in Symbol. Apost. in the Appendix to Cyprian's Works, p. 26. Oxonii. 1682.

[5] "Hæc sunt, quæ patres intra canonem concluserunt, et ex quibus fidei nostræ asser

(11.) Augustine, bishop of Hippo Regius in Africa, is the only father that wrote within the first four hundred years of the Christian æra [1], who, in his catalogue of the books of Scripture, seems to favour the introduction of the apocryphal books into the sacred canon. An investigation of that catalogue, however, compared with his recorded judgment concerning individual apocryphal books, will show that he recognised as of divine authority only those books which we, following the judgment of the ancient Jewish church, and of the Lord Jesus Christ and his inspired apostles, admit to be canonical.

Speaking of the diligent student of Scripture he says: — "In the canonical Scriptures, however, as much as possible let him follow the authority of the catholic churches, among which are those which deserved to have apostolical sees and letters. This rule therefore he will observe with regard to canonical Scriptures, that he may prefer such as are received by all catholic churches to those which some do not receive. But with regard to those which are not received by all, let him prefer those which are received by many and more important churches to those which are received by few churches of less authority. If, however, he should find some received by the greater number of churches, others by the more important [or eminent] (which however will scarcely happen), I think that such Scriptures ought to be held by him as of equal authority.

"Now, the entire canon of Scripture, concerning which we say that this consideration is to be observed, is contained in these books: — Five of Moses, that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; one book of Jesus Nave; one of the Judges; one small book called Ruth, which seems rather to belong to the beginning of the Kingdoms; then, the four books of the Kingdoms; and two of the Paralipomena [Remains, that is, 1 and 2 Chronicles], not following one another, but proceeding as it were parallel by the side of each other. These are the historical books which contain a succession of times and the order of events. There are others which do not observe this order, and are not connected together: as Job, Tobit, Esther, Judith, and the two books of the Maccabees, and the two books of Esdras, which [last] seem more to follow the order of history until the end of the Kingdoms and the Paralipomena. Next are the Prophets; among which are one book of the Psalms of David, and three of Solomon, the Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes. For those two books, Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, are called Solomon's on account of some resemblance [to his writings]: for it is very generally believed that they were written by Jesus the son of Sirach; which books however, since they are deservedly received into authority, are to be reckoned among prophetical books. The rest are the books of those who are properly called prophets; as the several books of the twelve prophets; which being joined together and never separated, are reckoned one book. The names of which prophets are these: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi. After them are four prophets of larger volumes: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel." [2] [The list of the books of the New Testament it is not necessary to recite.]

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tiones constare voluerunt. Sciendum tamen est, quod et alii libri sunt, qui non sunt canonici, sed *ecclesiastici* à majoribus appellati sunt; ut est Sapientia Salomonis, et alia Sapientia quæ dicitur filii Sirach, qui liber apud Latinos hoc ipso generali vocabulo Ecclesiasticus appellatur. Quo vocabulo non auctor libelli sed scripturæ qualitas cognominata est. Ejusdem ordinis est libellus Tobiæ, et Judith, et Maccabæorum libri. . . . . . Quæ omnia legi quidem in ecclesiis voluerunt, non tamen proferri ad auctoritatem ex his fidei confirmandam. *Cæteras vero scripturas apocryphas nominarunt, quas in ecclesia legi noluerunt.* Hæc nobis a patribus, ut dixi, tradita opportunum visum est hoc in loco designare ad instructionem eorum qui prima sibi ecclesiæ ac fidei elementa suscipiunt, ut sciant ex quibus sibi fontibus verbi Dei haurienda sint pocula." Rufini Expositio in Symbol. Apost. in the Appendix to Cyprian's Works, pp. 26, 27. Oxonii, 1682.

[1] Augustine belongs as much perhaps to the fifth as to the fourth century. He was born A.D. 354; was ordained a presbyter in 391; consecrated bishop of Hippo Regius in 395; and died in the year 430, in the thirty-fifth year of his episcopate and in the seventy-sixth year of his age. Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel History, chap. cxvii. § 1. Works, vol. ii. p. 576. 4to. edit.

[2] In canonicis autem scripturis ecclesiarum catholicarum quam plurimum auctoritatem sequatur: inter quas sane illæ sunt, quæ apostolicas sedes habere et epistolas accipere meruerunt. Tenebit igitur hunc modum in scripturis canonicis, ut eas, quæ ab omnibus

On this passage of Augustine it is to be observed:

1. That his preamble to his account of the books contained in the canon seems to intimate, that there was not at that time any canon of Scripture settled by any authority, which was *universally* acknowledged by Christians.

2. Augustine's list of canonical books agrees with that in the Septuagint version, which (we have seen in p. 484.) was the original of all the translations in use among the Latin Christians. Augustine being thus accustomed to Greek and Latin bibles, in which the apocryphal books had been introduced, we must suppose (unless we make him contradict himself), that in his catalogue of the books of Scripture he intended merely to enumerate the books at that time contained in the sacred volume: for in many other passages of his writings he has delivered his deliberate judgment concerning apocryphal books, which (he states) formed *no* part of the canon of inspired Scripture.

Thus, he acknowledges that the Jews had no prophets after their return into Judæa from the Babylonish captivity[1]; on which account, he elsewhere remarks that the books of Maccabees were not received into the Jewish canon, those books containing a history of later transactions.[2] Further, he has repeatedly admitted that the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon are the only books actually written by Solomon, and that the Jews have no more of his writings in their canon; although, on account of some resemblance of style, the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus have by some been called Solomon's, yet the more learned have no doubt that they are not his. But those two books were anciently received as entitled to authority, especially by the Western church.[3]

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accipiuntur ecclesiis catholicis, præponat eis quas quædam non accipiunt. In eis vero quæ non accipiuntur ab omnibus, præponat eas, quas plures gravioresque accipiunt, eis quas pauciores minorisve auctoritatis ecclesiæ tenent. Si autem alias invenerit à pluribus, alias à gravioribus haberi, quamquam hoc facile invenire non possit, æqualis tamen auctoritatis eas habendas puto.

"Totus autem canon scripturarum, in quo istam considerationem versandam dicimus, his libris continetur: quinque Moyseos, id est Genesi, Exodo, Levitico, Numeris, Deuteronomio, et uno libro Jesu Nave, uno Judicum, uno libello qui appellatur Ruth, qui magis ad Regnorum principium videtur pertinere: deinde quatuor Regnorum et duobus Paralipomenôn non consequentibus, sed quasi à latere adjunctis, simulque pergentibus. Hæc est historia, qua sibimet annexa tempora continet, atque ordinem rerum. Sunt aliæ, tamquam ex diverso ordine, quæ neque huic ordini neque inter se connectuntur: sicut est Job, et Tobias, et Esther, et Judith, et Macchabæorum libri duo, et Esdræ duo, qui magis subsequi videntur ordinatam illam historiam usque ad Regnorum et Paralipomenôn terminatam. Deinde Prophetæ: in quibus David unus liber Psalmorum, et Salomonis tres, Proverbiorum, Cantica Canticorum et Ecclesiastes. Nam illi duo libri, unus qui Sapientia, et alius qui Ecclesiasticus inscribitur, de quâdam similitudine Salomonis dicuntur: nam Jesus Sirach eos conscripsisse constantissime perhibetur, qui tamen, quoniam in auctoritatem recipi meruerunt, inter propheticos numerandi sunt. Reliqui sunt eorum libri, qui proprie Prophetæ appellantur; duodecim Prophetarum libri singuli, quoniam nunquam sejuncti sunt, pro uno habentur. Quorum Prophetarum nomina sunt hæc: Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheus, Naum, Abacuc, Sophonias, Aggæus, Zacharias, Malachias. Deinde quatuor Prophetæ sunt majorum voluminum, Esaias, Hieremias, Daniel, Ezechiel. His quadraginta quatuor libris Testamenti Veteris terminatur auctoritas." Augustin. De Doctrina Christiana, lib. ii. cap. 8. § 12, 13.

[1] "Toto autem illo tempore, ex quo redierunt de Babylonia, post Malachiam, Aggæum, et Zachariam, qui tunc prophetaverunt, et Esdram, *non habuerunt prophetas usque ad Salvatoris adventum*, nisi alium Zachariam patrem Johannis et Elisabet ejus uxorem, Christi nativitate jam proximâ." De Civitate Dei, l. xvii. c. 24.

[2] "Ab hoc tempore apud Judæos restituto templo, non reges sed principes fuerunt . . . quorum supputatio temporum non in Scripturis sanctis quæ canonicæ appellantur, sed in aliis invenitur: in quibus sunt et Machabæorum libri, quos non Judæi sed ecclesia pro canonicis habet propter quorumdam martyrum passiones vehementer atque mirabiles, qui, antequàm Christus venisset, in carnem usque ad mortem pro lege Dei certaverunt." De Civitat. Dei, lib. xviii. c. 36.

[3] "Prophetâsse etiam ipse [meaning Solomon] reperitur in suis libris qui tres recepti sunt in auctoritatem canonicam, Proverbia, Ecclesiastes, et Cantica Canticorum. Alii vero duo, quorum unus Sapientia, alter Ecclesiasticus, dicitur, propter eloquii similitudinem, ut Salomonis dicantur, obtinuit consuetudo: non autem esse ipsius, non dubitant doctiores. Eos tamen in auctoritatem maxime occidentalis antiquitus recepit ecclesia." De Civit. Dei, lib xvii. c. 20.

The book of *Judith*, he expressly states, formed no part of the Jewish canon.[1]

The book of *Wisdom*, he says, was not received by the Jews as of canonical authority[2]; and when it was read in the church, it was given to the readers or inferior ecclesiastical officers, who read it in a lower place than those books were read, which were universally acknowledged to be canonical, and which were read by the bishops and presbyters in a more elevated place.[3] Lastly, he explicitly declares that the books of *Maccabees* were NOT accounted canonical by the Jews[4]; "who do not receive the Scripture of the Maccabees as they do the Law and the Prophets, and the Psalms, to which our Lord bears testimony. . . . But it is received by the church not unprofitably, if it be read and heard soberly, especially on account of the history of the Maccabees who suffered so much from the hands of persecutors for the law of God."[5]

The result, therefore, of this examination of the testimony of Augustine is, that he did not receive the apocryphal books as divinely inspired; but substantially agrees with the judgment of Jerome and of Rufinus above given, viz. that these books are received as useful for the edification of the people; but that they are not of authority so as to confirm or prove any doctrine.

§ 4. *Testimonies of the principal later Divines of the Eastern or Greek Church, and of the Latin or Western Church, from the fifth to the fifteenth Century, that the Apocryphal Books form no part of the Canon of divinely inspired Scripture.*

Besides the catalogues of canonical books given in the preceding pages, there is a long series of upwards of sixty ecclesiastical authors, from the fifth to the fifteenth century, who have expressed themselves in equally explicit terms, that the apocryphal books form no part of the divinely inspired Scriptures.[6] The length, however, to which this section has extended will only admit of a statement of the principal testimonies.

1. JUNILIUS, an African bishop (about A. D. 560) excludes from the canonical books Judith, the Maccabees, and the book of Wisdom; and states as the reason for such exclusion that the Jews made a distinction between them.[7]

2. GREGORY I., bishop of Rome from A. D. 590 to 604 (a canonised saint of the modern church of Rome), received the same books of Scripture as the Jews. Having occasion to quote a passage from the first book of Maccabees, he thus apologises for so doing: "Concerning which we do not amiss, if we produce a testimony out of the books of Maccabees, though not canonical, yet published for the edification of the church."[8] And when he does quote any passage from the

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[1] "Per idem tempus [the reign of Darius] etiam illa sunt gesta, quæ conscripta sunt in libro Judith: quem sane in canone Scripturarum Judæi non recepisse dicuntur." De Civit. Dei, lib. xviii. c. 26.

[2] "Quem Judæi non recipiunt in auctoritatem canonicam." Retract. lib. ii. c. 20.

[3] "Qui [meaning the book of Wisdom] meruit in ecclesia Christi de gradu Lectorum recitari." De Prædestinatione Sanctorum, lib. i. c. 14.

[4] "Quos libros non Judæi, sed ecclesia, habet pro canonicis." De Civit. Dei, lib. xviii. c. 36.

[5] "Hanc Scripturam, quæ appellatur Macchabæorum, non habent Judæi sicut Legem et Prophetas et Psalmos, quibus Dominus testimonium perhibet. . . . . Sed recepta est ab ecclesia non inutiliter, si sobrie legatur et audiatur, maxime propter illos Macchabæos; qui pro lege Dei, sicut veri martyres, à persecutoribus tam indigna atque horrenda perpessi sunt." Contra Gaudentium, lib. i. c. 31.

[6] The testimonies above referred to may be found more briefly in Dr. Field's treatise "Of the Church," pp. 228—232. (Oxford, 1628, folio); and most fully in Bishop Cosin's "Scholastical History of the Canon," pp. 122—202. (London, 1657, 4to.); and in Dr Hody, "De Bibliorum Textibus Originalibus Libri IV." pp. 652—662., columns 64—121. (Oxonii, 1705, folio.) From the two last-mentioned learned works have been selected the testimonies given in pp. 499—502.

[7] "*Discipulus*. Quare hi libri non inter canonicas Scripturas currunt? *Magister*. Quoniam apud Hebræos quoque super hac differentia recipiebantur, sicut Hieronymus cæterique testantur." De Partibus Legis Divinæ, l. i. c. 3.

[8] "De qua re non inordinate agimus, si ex libris, licet non canonicis, sed tamen ad ædificationem ecclesiæ editis, testimonium proferamus." Moral. in Job. l. xix. c. 22. col. 13.

books of Tobit, Wisdom, or Ecclesiasticus, he adduces them only as the words of a certain wise man.[1]

3. LEONTIUS, formerly an advocate at Constantinople, but who subsequently entered into a monastery in Palestine, wrote between A. D. 590 and 610. He has left a complete catalogue of the books of Scripture received by the Oriental Christians in his day; which it is not necessary to transcribe as it is exactly and completely the canon of the Jews, with the omission of the book of Esther. He is totally silent with regard to the apocryphal books, which is a strong proof that those books were not recognised as of any authority.[2]

4. JOHN, a presbyter of Damascus, or Joannes Damascenus, is a canonised saint of the modern church of Rome, who flourished about A. D. 730. He has given a catalogue of the books of the Old and New Testament: concerning the former, he says, "It is to be observed that there are twenty-two books of the Old Testament according to the letters of the Hebrew language."[3] His catalogue is substantially that of Melito, already given in pp. 487, 488: the only apocryphal books which he mentions are those of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, of which he merely says that they are "excellent and useful, but are not numbered [that is, with the canonical books], nor were they placed in the ark."[4]

5. The venerable BEDE (A. D. 730) follows the ancient mode of dividing the books of the Old Testament into classes: but in his treatise on the Six Ages of the World he distinguishes the books of Maccabees from the divine Scripture, classing them with the writings of Josephus and of Julius Africanus.[5]

6. ALCUIN, abbot of St. Martin at Tours (A. D. 800) who had been a pupil of Bede, writing against Elipantus, bishop of Toledo (who had cited a passage from the book of Ecclesiasticus), says that Jerome and Isidore [bishop of Seville, in Spain,] testify that "the book was reckoned among apocryphal, that is, the doubtful Scriptures."[6] The testimony of Alcuin is adopted by his pupil RABANUS MAURUS, archbishop of Mentz (A. D. 830).[7]

7. RADULPHUS *Flaviacensis* (a monk of Flavigny in France, A. D. 910), who was in great repute for his knowledge of the Scriptures, in his commentary upon the book of Leviticus, speaking of the historical books of the Old Testament which are of *perfect authenticity* in the church, and are read for instruction, expressly excepts the books of Tobit, Judith, and the Maccabees from that number.[8]

8. ÆLFRIC, archbishop of Canterbury (A. D. 994—1005), in his Anglo-Saxon Treatise "Of the Old Testament," explicitly declares that the books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and of Maccabees, form no part of the inspired books of Scripture, but were merely of ecclesiastical usage, being "read in the church, of long custome, for much good instruction."

"There are," he says, "two bookes more placed with Solomon's workes, as if he made them; which, for likeness of stile and profitable use, hath gone for his; but Iesus the sonne of Syrach composed them. One is called Liber Sapientiæ, the booke

[1] Dr. Lardner has given numerous instances from the works of Gregory, Credibility of the Gospel History, part ii. chap. 156. § 2. in the notes.

[2] Leontius, de Sectis, action ii. in the Bibliotheca Patrum, tom. xi. pp. 496—498. Paris, 1644. Dr. Lardner has given the entire catalogue of Leontius, Credibility, part ii. ch. 158.

[3] *Ἰστέον δὲ ὡς εἴκοσι καὶ δύο βίβλοι εἰσὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς Ἑβραΐδος φωνῆς.* De Fide Orthodoxa, lib. iv. c. 17.

[4] *Ἐνάρετοι μὲν καὶ καλοὶ, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀριθμοῦνται, οὐδὲ ἔκειντο ἐν τῇ κιβωτῷ.* De Fide Orthodoxa, lib. iv. c. 17.

[5] "Hucusque divina Scriptura temporum seriem continet. Quæ autem post hæc apud Judæos sunt digesta, de Libris Macchabæorum et Josephi atque Africani Scriptis exhibentur, qui deinceps universam historiam usque ad Romana tempora prosecuti sunt." De Sex Ætat. Mundi, ad ann. 3496. Bedæ Op. tom. ii. p. 108. Coloniæ, 1612.

[6] "Quem librum B. Hieronymus atque Isidorus inter apocryphas, id est, dubias Scripturas deputatum esse absque ulla dubitatione testantur." Alcuin. adversus Elipantum, lib. i. col. 941.

[7] Rabanus Maurus, de Instit. Clericorum, lib. iii. c. 5.

[8] "Nam Tobias, Judith, et Maccabæorum libri, quamvis ad instructionem ecclesiæ legantur, *perfectam tamen* NON *habent auctoritatem.*" Radulp. Flav. in Leviticum, lib. xiv. near the beginning.

of Wisdome; and the other Ecclesiasticus; very large bookes and *read in the church of long custome*, for much good instruction." [1]

Of the two books of Maccabees he says:—"Among these bookes *the church hath accustomed to place two other* tending to the glory of God, and entitled Machabeorum, for the great valour of that family who prevailed then so much in fight against the heathen forces, encroaching much upon them, and seeking to destroy and root them from the land which God had given them, and so to empaire the glory of God himselfe." .... "I have turned them also into English, and so reade them you may (if you please) for your own instruction." [2]

9. RUPERT, abbot of Tuits or Duits in Germany (A. D. 1120), explicitly rejects the book of Wisdom from the canon of Scripture.[3]

10. PETER, abbot of Clugny (A. D. 1130), after enumerating the canonical books, says: "Besides these authentic books there are six others not to be rejected, viz., Judith, Tobit, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and the two books of Maccabees; which, though they attain not to the high dignity of the former, are yet deservedly received by the church on account of the commendable and very necessary doctrine which they contain." [4]

11. HUGO *de Sancto Victore* (abbot of Saint Victor at Paris, A. D. 1140) declares that "all the books of the Old Testament" are twenty-two in number. Moreover, there are other books, viz.: The Wisdom of Solomon, the book of Jesus the Son of Sirach, the books of Judith, Tobit, and the books of Maccabees, which are read, but are *not written in the canon.*[5] This judgment of Hugo de Sancto Victore is adopted verbatim by his contemporary, RICHARDUS *de Sancto Victore;* a canon regular in the same abbey, of which he was also prior for some time.[6]

12. The unknown compiler of the *Glossa Ordinaria* upon the Bible (who wrote about A. D. 1200), declares in the preface to that work, that the canonical books are distinguished from those which are not canonical; and that "there is as great a difference between these two as there is between that which is certain and that which is doubtful; for the *canonical* books were written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; but at what time the *non-canonical* or *apocryphal* books were published, or who were the authors of them, no one can tell." [7]

13. THOMAS AQUINAS (A. D. 1260), an eminent doctor among the schoolmen, and a canonised saint of the modern church of Rome, differed not from the doctors of his own age. Besides characterising the story of Bel and the Dragon as a fable [8], and declaring that the book of Wisdom is no part of canonical Scripture [9], he has the following striking passage, which has been *preserved* out of his Secunda Secundæ by Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence (A. D. 1409), who was afterwards canonised or enrolled among the saints of the Romish Church: — "These books" (meaning the

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[1] L'Isle's Saxon treatise concerning the Old and New Testament, written about the time of King Edgar, by Ælfricus Abbas, p. 17. London, 1623. 4to.

[2] Ibid., pp. 22, 23.

[3] "Verum hæc scriptura" [the book of Wisdom] "neque de canone est, nec de canonica scriptura sumpta est sententia hæc." Rupert. Tuitiensis in Gen. iii. 21.

[4] "Restant post hos authenticos sacræ scripturæ libros sex non reticendi libri, Sapientiæ, Jesu F. Sirach, Tobiæ, Judith, et uterque Machabeorum liber: qui, etsi ad sublimem illam præcedentium dignitatem pervenire non potuerunt, propter laudabilem tamen et pernecessariam doctrinam ab ecclesia suscipi meruerunt." Petrus Cluniacensis, in epistola contra Petrobrusianos.

[5] "Omnes ergo fiunt numero viginti duo. Sunt prætera alii quidem libri, ut Sapientia Salomonis, liber Jesu F. Sirach, et liber Judith et Thobias, et libri Maccabæorum; qui leguntur quidem, sed *non scribuntur in canone.*" Hugo de S. Victore, Eruditiones Didascalicæ, lib. iv. cap. 2. [Op. tom. iii. p. 17. Mogunt. 1617].

[6] Excerptionum, lib. ii. c. 9.

[7] "Inter quos tantum distat quantum inter certum et dubium: nam *canonici* sunt confecti, Spiritu Sancto dictante; *non-canonici* autem, sive *apocryphi*, nescitur quo tempore, quibusve auctoribus sint editi." Gloss. Ordin. Præf. De Libris Biblicis canonicis et non-canonicis. Additional testimonies against the apocryphal books by the author of this Gloss are given by Bishop Cosin, Scholast. Hist. of Canon, pp. 166—169.

[8] "Tertia est pars incidentalis, continens duo ultima capita, in quâ ponitur Susannæ Historia, et *Belis ac Draconis fabula.*" Thom. Aq. in Daniel. c. 13.

[9] "Vel illa apparitio" [meaning that of Samuel to Saul] "fuit procurata per dæmones. Si tamen Ecclesiastici authoritas non recipiatur propter hoc, quòd *inter canonicas Scripturas apud Hebræos* NON *habetur.*" Thom. Aquin. Summæ, Pars i. Quæst. lxxxix. art. 8.

Apocrypha) had no such authority as the other books of Scripture had, by which any man might effectually argue in matters of faith. Whence, probably, they have no more authority than the sayings of holy doctors, which are approved in the church.[1]

14. ANDREW HORNE, an eminent lawyer in the reign of Edward II., in the procemium or preface to his "Mirroir des Justices," states that, in the preparation of his work, he found it necessary to study the Old and New Testament, "in which" (he says) "we found it written, that law is nothing else but rules delivered by our holy predecessors in Holy Scripture for the saving of souls from everlasting damnation, notwithstanding the same were disused by false judges. And we found that the entire Holy Scripture remained in the Old and New Testament."[2] He then gives a catalogue of the sacred books entirely agreeing with that of the Hebrew canon, and of the ancient Christian churches above given: to which he adds:—"And besides these there are other books in the old Testament, *although they be not authorised as canonical*, viz., Tobie, Judeth, Maccabees, Ecclesiasticus."[3] The list of the books of the New Testament follows, to which is annexed the following sentence:—"And our usages were in accordance with Scripture, and in most intelligible language of you [us?] and of the common people."[4]

15. NICHOLAS LYRA, a commentator on the Scriptures (A. D. 1320), whose writings were held in great estimation, thus clearly asserts the *true* canon of the Old Testament. In his preface to the apocryphal book of Tobit, he says:—"Since, by God's assistance, I have written upon the canonical books of Holy Scripture, beginning first with Genesis, and proceeding to the end of the Revelation; trusting in the same assistance, I purpose to write upon the OTHER BOOKS *which are* NOT *in the canon*, viz., Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Judith, Tobit, and the books of Maccabees."[5] And in his commentary on the book of Ezra, he says:—"I purpose, for the present, to pass over the books of Tobit, Judith, and Maccabees, although they are historical; BECAUSE *they are* NOT *in the canon of Jews or Christians*. Jerome indeed says that they are reckoned among the *Apocrypha*."[6]

16. *Saint* ANTONINUS, archbishop of Florence (A. D. 1446—1459), acknowledges that *the Jews do not place the apocryphal* books in the canon of Scripture.[7]

17. Contemporary with Antoninus was Alphonsus TOSTATUS, bishop of Avila, in Spain, who, for his multifarious learning, was called the Wonder of the World. This eminent scholar pronounces his judgment in favour of all the reformed or Protestant churches, with reference to the apocryphal books:—"The church receives such books, permitting each of the faithful to read them; the church also reads them in her offices, on account of the many devout things which they contain. But the church *obliges no one necessarily to believe what is contained therein;* as is the case with the books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Maccabees, Judith, and Tobit.

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[1] "Idem etiam dicit Thomas, 2. 2. . . . . scilicet quod isti libri" [apocryphi] "non sunt tantæ authoritatis ut ex dictis corum posset efficaciter argumentari in his quæ sunt fidei, sicut ex aliis libris scripturæ sacræ. Unde fortè habent auctoritatem talem qualem habent dicta sanctorum doctorum approbata ab ecclesia." Antonini Summa Theol. Pars iii. tit. 18. c. vi. § 2.

[2] "Et J trovai et a plus breefe que jeo scavoy la necessity mise en remembrance a quoy cōpanions, me eiderent d'estudier en la veil Testament et novel et Canon, en l'escript trovomus [trouvons] que ley n'est autre chose que Rules dones par nre saincts predecesseurs en Sainct Escripture pur Saluer Almes d'damnation perpetuelle tout soit et per faux Juges defusces. Et Trovomus que tout Sainct Escripture remaine en la Veil Testament et Novel." La Somme appelle Mirroir des Iustices, p. 2. London, 1642. First edition.

[3] "Et oustre ceux sont autre liures en l'veil Testament, tout soit ne soient elles authorises canon, si come Tobie, Judeth, Maccabes, Ecclesiasticus." Ibid., p. 4.

[4] "Et de nous usages fuit accordant al Escripture, et en language pluis entendable en aid vous [nous?] et del Comor [n?] people." Ibid., p. 4.

[5] "Postquam, auxiliante Deo, scripsi super libros Sacræ Scripturæ canonicos, incipiendo a principio Geneseos, et procedendo usque ad finem Apocalypseos; de ejusdem confisus auxilio, super ALIOS intendo scribere, *qui* NON sunt de canone, scilicet, Sapientia, Ecclesiasticus, Judith, Tobias, et libri Machabæorum." N. Lyra, Præfat. in librum Tobiæ.

[6] "Libros autem Tobiæ, Judith et Maccabæorum, licet sint historiales, tamen intendo eos ad præsens pertransire; QUIA NON *sunt de canone apud Judæos, nec apud Christianos.*" Comment. in Ezra, c. 1.

[7] "Quartam partem, quam *non ponunt ipsi hebrei* [Hebræi] *in canone scripturarum sacrarum*, sed appellant apocrypha." Antonini Summa, Pars iii tit. 18. c. 6. § ii.

For though these books are received by Christians, and proof derived from them may, in some way or other, have weight, because the church retains those books; yet they are not effectual for proving those things which are in doubt against heretics or Jews.[1]

§ 5. *Confessions of learned Romanists in the Sixteenth Century, who lived before, during, and after the so-called Council of Trent, that the Apocryphal Books are no part of the Canon of the divinely inspired Scriptures.*

1. Cardinal Ximenes (A. D. 1502), in the preface to his celebrated polyglott edition of the Bible, printed in 1514—17, and commonly called the Complutensian Polyglott, says:—"The books, indeed, *without the canon*, which the church receives rather for the edification of the people, than as an authoritative confirmation of the doctrines of the church, are to be found in the Greek language only."[2]

2. Thomas Cajetan, a cardinal of the Romish church, who was commissioned to oppose Luther, has delivered the following memorable testimony against the modern Romish canon of Scripture decreed at the fourth session of the council of Trent, at the close of his commentary on the book of Esther:—"We here terminate our commentaries on the historical books of the Old Testament: for the rest (viz. the books of Judith, Tobit, and the Maccabees) are reckoned by Jerome *without the canonical books, and are placed among the Apocrypha, together with Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus*, as appears in his 'Prologus Galeatus' (or Helmeted Prologue). Nor should you be disturbed, O novice, if you should anywhere find those books reckoned among the canonical books, either in the holy councils, or in the holy doctors. For the words of the councils, as well as of the doctors, are to be submitted to the correction of Jerome; and according to his judgment, [expressed] to the bishops Chromatius and Heliodorus, those books (and if there be any similar ones in the canon of the Bible) are NOT *canonical*, that is, they are not those which are given as a rule for the confirmation of the faith. They may, however, be called canonical (that is, given as a rule) for the edification of the faithful; since [they are] received and authorised in the canon of the Bible for this purpose."[3]

3. John Driedo (A.D. 1535), who was professor of Divinity at Louvaine, and who was employed to write against Luther, acknowledges, first, that the histories of Judith and Tobit, &c., were not numbered in the time of the Old Testament among the canonical books of Scripture, but some of them [were] accounted apocryphal, as the writings of unknown authors, and others, no true histories at all. And, secondly, he confesses that the Christian church, on account of the authority of certain holy men, who are read to have made use of testimonies of this kind,

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[1] "Tales autem libros ecclesia recipit, permittens eos singulis fidelibus legere: ipsa quoque in officiis suis illos legit propter multa devota quæ in illis habentur. *Neminem tamen obligat ad necessario credendum id* quod ibi habetur: sicut est de libris Sapientiæ, Ecclesiastici, et Maccabæorum, Judith et Tobiæ. Illi enim à Christianis recipiantur, et probatio ex eis sumpta sit aliqualiter efficax, quia ecclesia istos libros tenet; contra hæreticos tamen, aut Hebræos, ad probandum ea quæ in dubium veniunt non sunt efficaces." Tostati Præfat. in Matt. q. 1. Bishop Cosin and Dr. Hody have given several passages from Tostatus, which are equally explicit against the canonical authority of the apocryphal books.

[2] "Libri *extra canonem*, quos ecclesia potius ad ædificationem populi quam ad autoritatem ecclesiasticorum dogmatum confirmandam recipit, Græcam tm̃ [tantum] habent Scripturam." Bib. Complut. tom. i. Prologus ad Lectorem, fol. iii. verso col. i.

[3] "Et hoc in loco terminamus commentaria librorum historialium Veteris Testamenti: nam reliqui (scil. Judith, Tobiæ, et Maccabæorum libri), a divo Hieronymo *extra canonicos libros supputantur, et inter apocrypha locantur*, cum libro Sapientiæ et Ecclesiastico, ut patet in Prologo Galeato Nec turberis, novitie, si alicubi repereris libros istos inter canonicos supputari, vel in sacris conciliis vel in sacris doctoribus. Nam ad Hieronymi limam reducenda sunt tam verba conciliorum quam doctorum: et juxta illius sententiam ad Chromatium et Heliodorum episcopos libri isti (et si qui alii sunt in canone Bibliæ similes) non sunt canonici, hoc est, non sunt regulares ad firmandum ea quæ sunt fidei. Possunt tamen dici canonici (hoc est regulares) ad ædificationem fidelium: utpote in canone Bibliæ ad hoc recepti et authorati." Cajetan. Comment. in Esther. fine.

reads the same with pious faith; and does not altogether reject or contemn them, *although it does not receive those books as of equal authority with the canonical Scriptures.*[1]

4. JOHN FERUS (A.D. 1540), a very learned man and excellent commentator, addressing those who were about to enter into the sacred ministry of the church, says:—"These are the books of the Apocrypha: the third and fourth of Esdras, Tobit, Judith, the book of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and the two books of Maccabees. *All the rest are called canonical, because they are of authority among the Jews, which cannot be disproved.* All the books, therefore, of the Old Testament, are in number thirty-seven; that is, twenty-eight of the canonical books, and nine of the Apocrypha.[2] Formerly, indeed, the apocryphal [books] were not publicly read in the church, nor was any one pressed with their authority; but it was lawful for every one, according to his own mind, to read them privately at home."[3]

5. SIXTUS *Senensis* (or, of Sienna) author of "Bibliotheca Sancta," a work which was formerly in great repute, speaking of the apocryphal books generally, says, that "*they were those which the ancient fathers of the church heretofore held to be apocryphal and uncanonical.*[4] . . . . . "As among the Hebrews there were twenty-two letters, by means of which all things could be expressed, that could either be spoken or written; so there were twenty-two books, by means of which all things could be comprehended, that could be known and declared concerning divine matters; which method of reckoning among Christians, Origen, Epiphanius, Gregory the theologian, Jerome, and Rufinus followed.[5]

6. The incidental confessions of Cardinal BELLARMINE, the most learned and industrious of all the advocates of the modern church of Rome, will appropriately conclude these testimonies of Romish theologians against the apocryphal books. In his chapter "concerning the books of Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and the Maccabees," he says, "these books are altogether rejected by the Hebrews, as St. Jerome testifies in the 'Armed Prologue.' Thence almost all the heretics of this time [meaning the reformed or Protestant churches] follow the judgment of the Hebrews."[6] . . . . . "That the Jewish synagogue doubted concerning these

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[1] Cosin's Scholast. Hist. of Canon, p, 201. "Ecclesia tamen Christiana propter auctoritatem veterum quorundam sanctorum, qui leguntur usi fuisse testimoniis ex hujusmodi historiis, easdem pia fide legit, et non prorsus rejicit nec contemnit; *tametsi non pari auctoritate recipiat illos libros cum scripturis canonicis.*" Driedo de Eccl. Scrip. et Dogm. l. i. c. 4. ad difficult. 3.

[2] The books of the Old Testament are twenty-eight in number, by reckoning *separately* the two books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, as also Ruth, Nehemiah, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah. The apocryphal books are nine in number, by reckoning the two books of Esdras and the two books of Maccabees as *four* books.

[3] "Sunt autem hi libri Apocryphi, 3 et 4 Esdras, Tobias, Judith, Liber Sapientiæ, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, et Machabæorum libri duo. *Omnes alii dicuntur Canonici, quia sunt imputabilis auctoritatis, etiam apud Judæos.* Omnes igitur libri Veteris Testamenti sunt XXXVII., hoc est, Canonicorum XXVIII., Apocryphorum IX. Olim verò in Ecclesia Apocryphi publice non recitabantur, nec quisquam auctoritate eorum premebatur; sed domi quidem et privatim pro suo cujusque animo fas erat illos legere." Ferus in Examine Ordinandorum. It cannot excite surprise that the writings of Ferus should be put into the Tridentine Index of Prohibited Books, which prohibition remains in force to this day. See the Index Librorum Prohibitorum sanctissimi domini nostri Gregorii XVI. pontificis maximi jussu editus, p. 143. Romæ, 1841. 8vo.

[4] "*Quos olim prisci ecclesiæ tanquam apocryphos et non canonicos habuerunt.*" Sixti Senensis Bibliotheca Sancta, lib. i. sect. 1. p. 2. A. Francofurti. Editio secunda.

[5] "Quidam, inter quos Josephus et Philo, supputant sacros libros juxta numerum Hebraicarum literarum: Ut quemadmodum sunt apud Hebræos duæ et viginti literæ, quibus omnia quæ dici scribique possunt comprehenduntur; ita viginta duo volumina sunt, quibus continentur omnia quæ de divinis rebus sciri et enumerari queant. Quam enumerationem sequuti sunt inter Christianos Origenes, Epiphanius, Gregorius Theologus, Hieronymus, et Rufinus." Sixti Senensis Bibliotheca Sancta, lib. i. sect. i. p. 2. B. Francofurti. Editio secunda.

[6] "Hi libri simul omnes rejiciuntur ab Hebræis, ut B. Hieronymus testatur in Prologo Galeato. Deinde Hebræorum sententiam sequuntur hæretici hujus temporis fere omnes." Bellarmin. de Verbo Dei, lib. i. c. 10. Disputationum, tom. i. col 31. B. (Coloniæ, 1615, fol.)

books appears from Josephus's first book against Apion. That the primitive church was also pressed with the like doubt, appears from Origen, Athanasius, Nazianzen, Epiphanius, Jerome, and the other fathers above cited, who do not place these books in the canon, and plainly say that these books were always questioned among learned men." [1]

Again: "We confess that *the church can by* NO MEANS *make a* CANONICAL *book out of a* NON-CANONICAL one, nor the contrary; but [can] only *declare* what is to be accounted canonical, and that not rashly, nor according to her own will, but according to the testimony of the ancients, and the resemblance between the books which are doubted of, and those concerning which there is no doubt; and lastly, according to the common sense, and as it were the taste of Christian people." [2] .... "I admit then that Jerome held that opinion," [viz. that Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and Maccabees were apocryphal books], because as yet *no* general council had determined any thing respecting these books, except the book of Judith [3], which Jerome afterwards received.[4] ..... "For the church, which was after the apostles, did not learn what books are canonical, and what are not, from any other source than from the tradition of the apostles." [5] .... For many of the ancients, as Melito, Epiphanius, Hilary, Jerome, Rufinus, openly followed the Hebrews not the Greeks, in stating the canon of the Old Testament." [6]

§ 6. *The Apocryphal Books are rejected by the Oriental or Greek Church from the Canon of Scripture.*

The "Orthodox Confession of the Catholic and Apostolic Eastern Church" does not enumerate the several canonical books, but refers generally to "the divine books of Holy Scripture." [7] ... But in the "Longer Catechism of the Russian Church" we have the account and catalogue of the books received as canonical by that section of the "apostolic eastern church."

"Q. How many are the books of the Old Testament?

A. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Athanasius the Great, and St. John Damascene reckon them at *twenty-two;* agreeing therein with the Jews, who so reckon them in the Hebrew tongue. Athanas. Ep. xxxix. de Test. [Fest.] J. Damasc. Theol. l. iv. c. 17.

Q. Why should we attend to the reckoning of the Hebrews?

A. Because, as the apostle Paul says, *unto them were committed the oracles of God.*

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[1] "Dubitasse autem de his libris Synagogam Judæorum patet ex Josepho, lib. i. contra Apionem. In simili dubitatione versatam primam ecclesiam Christianorum patet ex Origene, Athanasio, Nazianzeno, Epiphanio, Hieronymo, et ceteris patribus supra citatis, qui hos libros in canone non ponunt, et aperte dicunt semper de his libris quæstionem inter doctos homines fuisse." Ibid. col. 33. A. B.

[2] "Fatemur enim, *ecclesiam* NULLO MODO *posse facere librum* CANONICUM *de* NON CANONICO nec contrà; sed tantùm *declarare*, quis sit habendus canonicus, et hoc non temerè nec pro arbitratu, sed ex veterum testimoniis, et similitudine librorum de quibus ambigitur cum illis de quibus non ambigitur, ac demum ex communi sensu, et quasi gustu populi Christiani." Ibid. col. 34. A.

[3] "Admitto igitur Hieronymum in ea fuisse opinione, quia nondum generale concilium de his libris aliquid statuerat, excepto libro Judith, quem etiam Hieronymus postea recepit." Ibid. col. 34. D.

[4] This assertion of Bellarmine is not true. Bishop Cosin has shown that Jerome *never* acknowledged the book of Judith to be canonical Scripture (Scholast. Hist. of Canon. pp. 84, 85.); and with Dr. Cosin agrees Lindanus, bishop of Ruremond, in the passage cited in p. 482. *suprà.*

[5] "Nam ecclesia, quæ post Apostolos fuit, non aliunde didicit, qui libri sint canonici, et qui non sint, nisi ex traditione apostolorum." Bellarmin. de Verbo Dei, lib. i. c. 20. tom. i. col. 66. A.

[6] "Nam multi veterum, ut Melito, Epiphanius, Hilarius, Hieronymus, Rufinus, in canone exponendo Veteris Testamenti, aperte sequuti sunt Hebræos, non Græcos." Ibid. col. 67. A.

[7] In the fourth Question, on Faith, it is stated in general terms, that the doctrines of that church are twofold: some being committed to writing, which are comprised in the divine books of Holy Scripture:—τὰ ὁποῖα περιέχονται εἰς τὰ θεολόγικα βιβλία τῆς ἁγίας γράφης. Orthodoxa Confessio .... Ecclesiæ Orientalis, pp. 18, 19. Lipsiæ, 1695. 8vo.

and the sacred books of the Old Testament have been received from the Hebrew church of that Testament by the Christian church of the New.

Q. How do St. Cyril and St. Athanasius enumerate the books of the Old Testament?

A. As follows: 1. The book of Genesis: 2. Exodus: 3. Leviticus: 4. The book of Numbers: 5. Deuteronomy: 6. The book of Jesus the son of Nun: 7. The book of Judges, and with it, as an appendix, the book of Ruth: 8. The first and second books of Kings, as two parts of one book: 9. The third and fourth books of Kings: 10 The first and second books of Paralipomena: 11. The first book of Esdras, and the second, or, as it is entitled in Greek, the book of Nehemiah: 12. The book of Esther: 13. The book of Job: 14. The book of Psalms: 15. The Proverbs of Solomon: 16. Ecclesiastes, also by Solomon: 17. The Song of Songs, also by Solomon: 18. The book of the Prophet Isaiah: 19. Of Jeremiah: 20. Of Ezekiel: 21. Of Daniel: 22. Of the twelve Prophets."

[The coincidence of this list with those of Athanasius and Cyril will be apparent by comparing their catalogues, which have been given in pp. 489, 490. *suprà*.]

"Q. Why is no notice taken, in this enumeration of the books of the Old Testament, of the book of Wisdom of the Son of Sirach, and certain others?

A. Because they do not exist in Hebrew.

Q. How are we to regard these last named books?

A. Athanasius the Great says, that they have been appointed by the fathers to be read by proselytes, who are preparing for admission into the church." [1]

The result of the preceding investigation is, that all Protestant churches are fully justified in rejecting the apocryphal books from the canon of the divinely inspired Scriptures:—

First, because these books possess *no internal evidence* or authority whatever to procure their admission into the sacred canon. Not one of them is extant in pure ancient Biblical Hebrew. They were all written subsequently to the cessation of the prophetic spirit; and not one of the writers or authors of them, in direct terms, advances any claim to inspiration. Moreover, the apocryphal books contain many things which are either fabulous, or contradictory to the canonical Scriptures in facts, doctrines, and moral practice, as well as contradictory to authentic profane history.

Secondly, the apocryphal books possess *no external evidence*, to procure their admission into the sacred canon; for they were not received into that canon by the ancient Jewish church, and were not sanctioned by Jesus Christ, or by his divinely inspired apostles. No subsequent Jewish writers have recognised the apocryphal books as forming part of their canon of the Old Testament. Further, these books were not admitted into the canon of Scripture in any catalogue of the sacred books recognised by any council of the ancient Christian church, whose decrees were received as binding upon the universal church; neither are they to be found in any catalogues of the canonical books of Scripture published by the fathers or ecclesiastical writers of the first four centuries. Moreover, we have the consentient testimony of numerous writers in regular succession, from the fifth to the fifteenth century, all of whom depose against the canonicity of the apocryphal books, besides the involuntary admissions or confessions of learned advocates of the modern Church of Rome, who lived before and after the so-called council of Trent; and though some of them, "in many other matters of religion, were violently carried away with the abuses and streams of the time," yet, "in this particular, which we have examined and followed through all the ages of the church, the current ran clear and smooth among them." [2]

Lastly, the apocryphal books are rejected by the Oriental or Greek Church from the canon of divinely inspired Scripture: so that, as Bishop Burnet has well observed, "we have the concurring sense of the whole church of God in this matter." [3] Nor were these books received into the canon of Scripture until the eighth day of April, 1546; when five cardinals, eight archbishops, and forty bishops [4]

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[1] The Doctrine of the Russian Church translated from the Slavono-Russian Originals. By the Rev. W. Blackmore, pp. 38, 39. Aberdeen, 1845. 8vo.

[2] Bp. Cosin, Scholastical History of the Canon, p. 203.

[3] Bp. Burnet on the Thirty-nine Articles, pp. 111, 112. Sixth edition.

[4] The names of these persons, together with the places or sees whence they derived their episcopal titles, are given by Labbé and Cossart, Concil. tom. xiv. col. 745. and 746.

of the Roman obedience (in all, fifty-three persons, who were almost wholly Italians) arrogating to themselves the appellation of the œcumenical synod of Trent, at their fourth session, presumed to place the uninspired apocryphal books in the same rank with the inspired writings, and denounced an anathema against every one who should not receive them and every part of them as sacred and canonical. This canonising of the apocryphal books is, in no inconsiderable degree, to be ascribed to the incompetency of the members of the synod or council of Trent: concerning which it has been most truly said, that "as they had neither council, nor father, nor schoolman, nor other writer that ever spake like them in former ages, so at this very time they had none but their own small and inconsiderable number to give a suffrage to this their synodical, or (as they most untruly and vainly called it) their œcumenical decree. For, of the Greek Church they had not one; . . . . . of the Helvetian, German and northern churches, none; of the French, scarce two; of the Spanish, not many" [Sleidan says, five]; "all the rest we find to be Italians (and no such great number of them neither); among whom divers were the pope's pensioners, and sent thither to out-balance other men's voices; some of them titular; and some of them unlearned. And was it ever heard of in the world before, that *forty* bishops of Italy, assisted perhaps with half a score others, should make up a general council for all Christendom? Wherein, as there was not any one greatly remarkable for learning that voted this canonical authority to those books, which, by the consent of the oriental and occidental churches were ever held to be uncertain and apocryphal; so some of them were lawyers, perhaps learned in that profession, but of little understanding in religion. And though other some were divines, yet many of them were of less than ordinary sufficience; but the greater number were courtiers, and bishops of such small places (or dignities only titular), that, supposing every one to represent the clergy and people from whom he came, it could not be said, that one of a thousand in Christendom was represented in this pretended council."

The following are the most material parts of the decree of the council of Trent for the canonising of the uninspired apocryphal books.

"The sacred, holy, œcumenical, and general synod of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Spirit, ... following the example of the orthodox fathers, doth receive and reverence with equal piety and veneration all the books, as well of the Old as of the New Testament, the same God being the author of both; and also the aforesaid traditions" [meaning those, whether written or unwritten, which had been mentioned in a preceding sentence], pertaining both to faith and manners, whether received from Christ himself, or dictated by the Holy Spirit, and preserved in the catholic church by continual succession.[1] Moreover, lest any doubt should arise respecting the sacred books which are received by the council, it has been judged proper to insert a list of them in the present decree. They are these: "Of the Old Testament—the five books of Moses, that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; Joshua; Judges; Ruth; four books of Kings; two of Paralipomena [Chronicles]; the first book of Esdras, and the second which is called Nehemiah; Tobit; Judith; Esther; Job; the Psalms of David, one hundred and fifty; the Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; the Song of Songs; *Wisdom; Ecclesiasticus;* Isaiah; Jeremiah with *Baruch;* Ezekiel; Daniel [including the Song of the Three Children]; the Twelve Minor Prophets, that is, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi; and two books of Maccabees, the first and second." [Of the books of the New Testament it is not necessary to give the list, as it coincides with our canon.]

"*Whoever shall not receive, as sacred and canonical, all these books, and every part*

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[1] "Here," it has been well remarked, "are two notorious falsehoods. 1. That the 'orthodox fathers' received 'with equal piety and veneration' all the books as enumerated in the decree; it being well known that, during the first four centuries, the apocryphal books were entirely rejected, and that subsequently they were only read for instruction, not regarded as divine. 2. That the Romish traditions have been 'preserved by continual succession;' whereas the invention of the rites and opinions therein alluded to, and their gradual introduction into the church, are historical facts." Cramp's Text-Book of Popery, p. 45. Second edition.

of them, as they are commonly read in the catholic church, and are contained in the Old Latin Vulgate edition, or shall knowingly and deliberately despise the aforesaid traditions, *let him be accursed.*"[1]

From the facts and testimonies collected in the preceding pages, it has (we trust) been irrecusably shown that the Romish Church, in receiving the apocryphal books as part of the divinely inspired Scriptures, has not only set at nought all historical truth and evidence, but has acted in direct violation of one of her own fundamental principles. The *unanimous consent of the fathers* is what she requires for the interpretation of Scripture.[2] But on this subject, instead of a unanimous CON*sent* for the first four centuries, she is met with a *unanimous* DIS*sent.* Her maxim is, to receive (according to the rule of one of her own saints, Vincent of Lerins, who is commemorated on the 24th of May,) *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est*[3]; "what has been *believed every where, at all times, and by all;*" but here she receives what has never been believed any where, or by any one of the fathers; and she anathematises all Protestants, and her advocates spurn and denounce their editions of the Bible as *mutilated,* because they exclude from the canon of inspired books those writings which were excluded by Jesus Christ and his divinely inspired apostles, and which were also excluded with most remarkable unanimity by the fathers of the first four centuries, many of whom are enrolled by the Romish Church in *her* calendar of reputed saints. "The decree of the council" or synod of Trent, on the apocryphal books, "was a most wretched blunder, arising partly from ignorance and partly from partisan heat and blindness. A church which claims infallibility can never correct her own blunders, but must hold on upon them till they eat the very heart out of her; as a man may be destroyed, mind and body, by the morbid growth of an ineradicable wen."[4]

[1] "Sacrosancta, œcumenica, et generalis Tridentina Synodus, in Spiritu Sancto legitimè congregata . . . . orthodoxorum patrum exempla secuta, omnes libros tam veteris quam novi Testamenti, cum utriusque unus Deus sit auctor, necnon traditiones ipsas, tum ad fidem, tum ad mores pertinentes, tamquam vel ore tenus a Christo, vel a Spiritu Sancto dictatas, et continua successione in ecclesia catholica conservatas, pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipit, et veneratur. Sacrorum vero librorum indicem huic decreto adscribendum censuit; ne cui dubitatio suboriri possit, quinam sint, qui ab ipsa synodo suscipiuntur. Sunt vero infra scripti: Testamenti Veteris, quinque Moysi, id est, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numeri, Deuteronomium: Josue, Judicum, Ruth, quatuor Regum, duo Paralipomenon, Esdræ primus, et secundus qui dicitur Nehemias; Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, Psalterium Davidicum centum quinquagenta psalmorum, Parabolæ, Ecclesiastes, Canticum canticorum, Sapientia, Ecclesiasticus, Isaias, Jeremias cum Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel; duodecim Prophetæ Minores, id est, Osea, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Michæus, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggæus, Zacharias, Malachias; duo Machabæorum, primus et secundus. *Si quis autem libros ipsos integros cum omnibus suis partibus,* prout in ecclesia catholica legi consueverunt, et in veteri vulgata latina editione habentur, *pro sacris et canonicis non susceperit,* et traditiones prædictas sciens et prudens contempserit; ANATHEMA SIT." Concilii Tridentini Canones et Decreta. Sess. iv. Decretum de canonicis Scripturis, pp. 24, 25. Parisiis, 1824; or, Labbé et Cossart. Concil. tom. xiv. col. 746.

[2] "Nor will I ever take and interpret them" [the Sacred Scriptures] "otherwise than according to the *unanimous consent of the fathers.*" Creed of Pius IV. art. 2.

[3] Vincentii Lirinensis Commonitorium, cap. 2. in Gallandii Bibliotheca Patrum, tom. x. p. 103.

[4] Bibliotheca Sacra for April, 1854, p. 305. The fatal influence of the Tridentine Decree, respecting the apocryphal books, upon the Church of Rome's pretended claim to

III. Respecting the actual VALUE OF THE APOCRYPHAL BOOKS, various opinions have existed at different times, especially since the Reformation in the sixteenth century. As ancient writings, some of them are valuable for the historical information they contain, and also because they serve to elucidate the phraseology of the Scriptures.

The reverent regard for these books, cherished by the early fathers of the Christian church, may be satisfactorily accounted for. "When the apocryphal books were written, if in Greek the originals, if in Chaldee" [or Syriac, both which languages in the New Testament and in other writings are frequently called Hebrew,] "the Greek translations, were in all probability inserted into the Septuagint, along with the still more sacred books of Scripture, by Alexandrian Jews; who, in their state of dispersion, were naturally zealous about all that concerned their religion and the history of their race.[1] . . . . . No doubt the Alexandrian Jews ascribed great importance to the books which they thus inserted into the Septuagint canon." "With the exception of Origen, the fathers of the Christian church — for the first three centuries — were profoundly ignorant of Hebrew. It was natural, therefore, that they should have adopted the Greek version as their Old Testament; and accordingly it formed the original of their Latin version. Hence the books of the Old Testament current in the church were, in Greek the Septuagint, in Latin a translation from the Greek Septuagint, both therefore containing the apocryphal books. It was not till the time of Jerome" [in the latter part of the fourth century] "that a translation was made from the Hebrew: and hence, in the eyes of many, the whole collection of books contained in the Septuagint, and in the old Latin translation, was naturally viewed with the respect due to Scripture. Many indeed of the fathers knew the difference between the books of the Hebrew canon and those of the Apocrypha; and knew that the former were divine, the latter of inferior authority. But still many quoted almost indiscriminately from both."[2]

At the Reformation, Luther, Cranmer, Calvin, and others of the earliest reformers, followed the practice of the ancient Greek Church. The Church of England also adheres to the practice of the ancient church, and regards the canonical books of Scripture as the only divinely inspired rule of faith and practice. She has therefore most properly relegated the apocryphal books to an appropriate place between "those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the church."[3]

infallibility, is eloquently stated by Dr. Wordsworth, in his Lectures on the Inspiration of Scripture, pp. 60, 61.

[1] "Thus the Song of the Three Children, the story of Susanna, and the history of Bel and the Dragon, seemed connected with, and were therefore added to, the book of Daniel. The Greek Esdras seemed naturally to be connected with the Greek translation of the book of Ezra; the book of Wisdom, being called the Wisdom of Solomon, was added to the Song of Solomon; and the book of Ecclesiasticus, called the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach, was placed after the Wisdom of Solomon." Browne's Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, vol. i. pp. 207, 208.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Article VI. of the Confession of Faith of the Church of England.

Accordingly, in the large folio and quarto editions of the authorised English version of the Bible, these are specially distinguished by having the heading of "APOCRYPHA" in large capital letters prefixed to them. Moreover, as several of these books contain many noble sentiments and useful moral precepts, the Church of England, following the example of the ancient church of Christ, "doth read them for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth not apply them to establish any doctrine."[1] On this account the reader will find prefaces to the several apocryphal books in the Second Volume of this work.

"The practice of the Church of England is, to read" [only] "certain chapters from some of these books on some festivals and week-days;"[2] but it reads no part either of the books of Esdras, or of Maccabees, or of the additions to the book of Esther; nor does it read the Prayer of Manasses.[3] None of the proper lessons for the Lord's Day or Sunday are taken from the apocryphal books.[4] "Hence, when a festival, for which an apocryphal lesson is provided, falls on a Sunday, the canonical lesson of the Sunday ought to be read in the church. And while the Church of Rome blends" the apocryphal books "in her Bible indiscriminately with the other books of Scripture," requiring the whole to be received as sacred and canonical under the penalty of an anathema, "the Church of England in her Bible places them in a separate compartment by themselves..... While she has removed the abuse, she has wisely retained the good things which were abused, and has restored them to their ancient use; and by keeping her eye steadfastly fixed upon the past, she is enabled to walk more surely in the present, and to look forward more hopefully to the future."[5] Thus she is not popish in the ecclesiastical use of these books, as some have mistakenly asserted, but simply follows the practice of the ancient Christian church.

"THERE REMAINS NOTHING NOW BUT THAT, HAVING LAID OUR FOUNDATION SURE UPON THE CANONICAL AND UNDOUBTED SCRIPTURES, WHEREIN THE WILL OF GOD AND THE MYSTERIES OF OUR HOLY RELIGION ARE REVEALED TO US, WE PROCEED FROM THE TRUTH AND PRINCIPLES OF OUR BELIEF TO A RIGHTEOUS, SOBER, AND HOLY REGULATION OF OUR LIVES IN THE STRICT AND UNIFORM PRACTICE OF ALL RELIGIOUS DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS, THAT THESE DIVINE SCRIPTURES HAVE LAID UPON US."[5] THEREFORE

"SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES ..... WHICH ARE ABLE TO MAKE THEE WISE UNTO SALVATION THROUGH FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS. ALL SCRIPTURE IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF

[1] Article VI. of the Confession of Faith of the Church of England.
[2] Wordsworth's Lectures on the Inspiration of Scripture, p 65.
[3] Tomline's Elements of Christ. Theol. vol. ii. p. 199.
[4] Wordsworth's Lectures, pp. 65. 103.
[5] Cosin's Scholastical History of the Canon, p. 213.

GOD, AND IS PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, THAT THE MAN OF GOD MAY BE PERFECT, THROUGHLY FURNISHED [*or*, PERFECTED] UNTO ALL GOOD WORKS." — JOHN v. 39. 2 TIM. iii. 15—17.

SECT. II.

ON THE WRITINGS USUALLY CALLED THE APOCRYPHAL BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

[*Referred to in p. 92. of this Volume.*]

I. IT is not wonderful that, besides those which are admitted to be canonical books of the New Testament, there were many others which also pretended to be authentic. "Men of the best intentions might think it incumbent on them to preserve, by writing, the memory of persons, facts, and doctrines, so precious in their estimation, who might at the same time be deficient in the talents and information requisite to discriminate, and duly to record, the truth. The sacred writers intimate that such men had already begun, even in their time, to appear; and gave warning that others would arise, less pure in their motives. Luke says that many had taken in hand to write gospels (Luke i. 1.); Paul cautions the Galatians against other gospels than that which they had received from him (Gal. i. 6—9.); and warns the Thessalonians not to be *troubled by any letter as from him, declaring that the day of Christ is at hand.*" (2 Thess. ii. 2.) In the ages following the apostles, the apocryphal writings, which were published under the names of Jesus Christ and his apostles, their companions, &c. (and which are mentioned by the writers of the first four centuries under the names of gospels, epistles, acts, revelations, &c.) greatly increased. But though they had the names of the apostles and other disciples of Christ prefixed to them, they were never able to compete with the canonical Scriptures, and very soon fell into universal disrepute. Most of them indeed have long since perished[1], though some are still extant, which have been collected (together with notices of the lost pieces) and published by John Albert Fabricius, in his *Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti*, the best edition of which appeared at Hamburgh, in 1719—1743, in three parts forming two volumes, 8vo.[2] Of that work the Rev. and learned Mr. Jones made great use, and, in fact, translated the greater part of it in his "New and Full Method of settling the Canonical Authority of the New Testament." The apocryphal books extant are, an *Epistle from*

[1] See an alphabetical catalogue of them, with references to the fathers by whom they were mentioned, in Jones on the Canon, vol. i. pp. 119—123.

[2] *Another* apocryphal book, purporting to be the acts of the apostle Thomas, has been discovered at Paris. It was published at Leipsic in 1823, by Dr. J. C. Thilo. But the most complete collection of the apocryphal books of the New Testament will be found in Prof. Tischendorf's "Evangelia Apocrypha," Lipsiæ, 1853; and "Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha," Lipsiæ, 1851; with the various readings of numerous manuscripts and copious prologomena.

Jesus Christ to Abgarus; his Epistle, which (it is pretended) fell down from heaven at Jerusalem, directed to a priest named Leopas, in the city of Eris; the Constitutions of the Apostles; *the Apostles' Creed;* the *Apostolical Epistles of Barnabas, Clemens* or *Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp; the Gospel of the Infancy of our Saviour; the Gospel of the Birth of Mary; the Prot-evangelion of James; the Gospel of Nicodemus; the Martyrdom of Thecla* or *Acts of Paul,* Abdias's History of the Twelve Apostles; *the Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans; the Six Epistles of Paul to Seneca,* &c. Of these various productions those of which the titles are printed in *Italics* are comprised in the publication, entitled "*The Apocryphal New Testament, being all*[1] *the Gospels, Epistles, and other Pieces now extant, attributed in the first four centuries to Jesus Christ, his Apostles, and their companions, and not included in the New Testament by its compilers. Translated and now collected into one volume, with Prefaces and Tables, and various Notes and References.* London, 1820." — Second edition, 1821, 8vo. The writings ascribed to Barnabas, Ignatius (at least his *genuine* epistles), Polycarp, and Hermas, ought not in strictness to be considered as apocryphal, since their authors, who are usually designated the *Apostolical Fathers,* from their having been contemporary for a longer or a shorter time with the apostles of Jesus Christ, were not divinely inspired apostles. The first epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, indeed, was for a short time received as canonical in some few Christian churches, but was soon dismissed as an uninspired production; the fragment of what is called the second epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, Dr. Lardner has proved *not* to have been written by him. These productions of the apostolical fathers, therefore, have no claim to be considered as apocryphal writings.

As the external form of the Apocryphal New Testament[2] harmonises with that of the larger octavo editions of the authorised English Version of the New Testament, the advocates of infidelity have been not slow in availing themselves of it, to attempt to undermine the credibility of the genuine books of the New Testament; but with no success in their unhappy efforts to subvert the faith of Christian believers.

II. In order, however, that the reader may see how LITTLE the sacred writings of the New Testament can suffer from the publication just mentioned[3], a brief statement shall be given of the very satisfac-

[1] This is a misnomer; for *all* the apocryphal writings are not included in the publication in question.

[2] The title-page is surrounded with a broad black rule, similar to that found in many of the large 8vo. editions of the New Testament, printed in the last century, and the different books are divided into chapters and verses, with a table of contents drawn up in imitation of those which are found in all editions of the English Bible.

[3] In 1698 Mr. Toland published his *Amyntor,* in which he professed to give a catalogue of books, attributed in the primitive times to Jesus Christ, his apostles, and other eminent persons, "together with remarks and observations relating to the canon of Scripture." He there raked together whatever he could find relating to the spurious gospels and pretended sacred books which appeared in the early ages of the Christian church. These he produced with great pomp to the number of eighty and upwards; and though they were most of them evidently false and ridiculous, and carried the plainest marks of forgery and im-

tory reasons, for which the apocryphal (or rather spurious) writings ascribed to the apostles have been deservedly rejected from the canon of Scripture.

1. *In the first place, they were* NOT *acknowledged as authentic, nor were they much used by the primitive Christians.*

There are *no* quotations of these apocryphal books in the genuine writings of the apostolical fathers, that is, of Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Hermas, whose writings reach from about the year of Christ 70 to 108; nor are they found in any ancient catalogues of the sacred books. Some of them indeed are mentioned, but not cited by Irenæus and Tertullian, who lived in the second century. Indeed the apocryphal books above mentioned are expressly, and in so many words, rejected by those who have noticed them, as the forgeries of heretics, and, consequently, as spurious and heretical.

2. *The enemies of Christianity, who were accustomed to cite passages from the four Gospels for the sake of perverting them, or of turning them into ridicule, have* NEVER *mentioned these productions*: which we may be sure they would have done, had they known of their existence, because they would have afforded them much better opportunities than the genuine Gospels did, for indulging their malevolence.

3. *Few or none of these productions, which (it is pretended) were written in the apostolic age, were composed before the second century, and* several *of them were forged so late as the third century, and were rejected as spurious at the time they were attempted to be imposed upon the Christian world.*

A brief statement of the dates of the pieces contained in the *Apocryphal New Testament* (with the exception of the writings of the apostolic fathers, which are omitted for the reason already stated,) will demonstrate this fact.

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posture, of which, no doubt, he was very sensible, yet he did what he could to represent them as of equal authority with the four Gospels and other sacred books of the New Testament, now received among Christians. To this end he took advantage of the unwary and ill-grounded hypotheses of some learned men, and endeavoured to prove that the books of the present canon lay concealed in the coffers of private persons till the latter times of Trajan or Adrian, and were not known to the clergy or churches of those times nor distinguished from the spurious works of the heretics; and that the Scriptures which we now receive as canonical, and others which we now reject, were indifferently and promiscuously cited and appealed to by the most ancient Christian writers. His design in all this manifestly was to show that the Gospels and other sacred writings of the New Testament, now acknowledged as canonical, really deserved no greater credit, and are no more to be depended upon than those books which are rejected and exploded as forgeries. And yet he had the confidence to pretend, in a book he afterwards published, that his intention in his Amyntor was not to invalidate, but to illustrate and confirm the canon of the New Testament. This may serve as one instance out of many that might be produced of the insincerity of this opposer of revelation, whose assertions have been adopted by infidels of the present day. Many good and satisfactory refutations of Toland were published at that time by Dr. Samuel Clarke, Mr. Nye, and others, and especially by the learned Mr. Jeremiah Jones in his "New and Full Method of settling the Canonical Authority of the New Testament," in 2 vols. 8vo., reprinted at Oxford in 1798, in 3 vols. 8vo. From this work the following refutation of the pretensions of the apocryphal books of the New Testament has been principally derived, as well as from Dr. Lardner, who in different parts of his works has collected much curious information respecting them. The passages being too numerous to be cited at length, the reader will find them indicated in the fifth index to his works, article *Apocryphal Books*. *Six months* AFTER the publication of the second edition of this work, the Rev. Tho. Rennell published "Proofs of Inspiration, or the grounds of distinction between the New Testament and the apocryphal volume: occasioned by the recent publication of the Apocryphal New Testament by Hone, London, 1822." 8vo. As the arguments produced in this tract are necessarily similar to those stated in the former part of this volume as well as in the present article of this Appendix, this brief notice of Mr. R.'s pamphlet may suffice.

Thus, the pseudo-*Epistles of Abgarus* prince of Edessa and *of Jesus Christ* were never heard of, until published in the *fourth* century by the ecclesiastical historian Eusebius [1], who translated the correspondence into Greek from a Syriac manuscript which he had received from the archives of Edessa.—Though an *Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans* was extant in the second century, and was received by Marcion the heretic, who was notorious for his mutilations and interpolations of the New Testament, yet that now extant is not the same with the ancient one under that title in Marcion's Apostolicon or collection of apostolical epistles. It never was extant in Greek, and is a production of uncertain, but unquestionably very late, date. Mr. Jones conjectures it to have been forged by some monk, not long before the Reformation [2]; and, as is shown in pages 522, 523. *infrà*, it was compiled from several passages of St. Paul's Epistles. —The *six Epistles of Paul to Seneca*, and eight of the philosopher to him, were never heard of, until they were mentioned by Jerome and Augustine, two writers who lived at the close of the *fourth* century; and who do not appear to have considered them as genuine.[3] — In the third or perhaps the second century a *Gospel of the Birth of Mary* was extant and received by several of the ancient heretics, but it underwent many alterations, and the ancient copies varied greatly from that now printed in the apocryphal New Testament, which was translated by Mr. Jones from Jerome's Latin version, first made at the close of the fourth century.[4] This Gospel of the Birth of Mary is for the most part the same with the *Prot-evangelion or Gospel of James* (which, nevertheless, it contradicts in many places); and both are the production of some Hellenistic Jew. Both also were rejected by the ancient writers.—The two *Gospels of the Infancy* (the second of which bears the name of Thomas) seem to have been originally the same; but the ancient Gospel of Thomas was different from those of the Infancy of Christ. They were received as genuine only by the Marcosians, a branch of the sect of Gnostics, in the beginning of the *second* century; and were known to Mohammed or the compilers of the Koran, who took from them several idle traditions concerning Christ's infancy.[5]—The *Gospel of Nicodemus*, also called *the Acts of Pilate*, was *forged* at the latter end of the third or in the beginning of the *fourth* century, by Leucius Charinus, who was a noted forger of the Acts of Peter, Paul, Andrew, and others of the apostles.[6]—The *Apostles' Creed* derives its name, not from the fact of its having been composed, clause by clause, by the twelve apostles (of which we have no evidence), but because it contains a brief summary of the doctrines which they taught. It is nearly the same with the creed of Jerusalem, which appears to be the most ancient summary of the Christian faith that is extant; and the articles of which have been collected from the catechetical discourses of Cyril, who was bishop of Jerusalem in the fourth century.—The *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, though ranked among the apocryphal Scriptures by some of the primitive Christians (by whom several things therein related were credited), were in part the forgery of an Asiatic presbyter at the close of the first or at the beginning of the *second* century, who confessed that he had committed the fraud out of love to Paul, and was degraded from his office; and they have subsequently been interpolated.[7]

4. ***When any book is cited, or seems to be appealed to, by any Christian writer, which is not expressly and in so many words rejected by him, there are other sufficient arguments to prove that he did not esteem it to be canonical.***

For instance, though Origen in one or two places takes a passage out of the Gospel according to the Hebrews, yet in another place *he rejects it*, under the name of the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles, as a book of the heretics, and declares that the

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[1] Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. l. i. c. 12. See Jones on the Canon, vol. ii. pp. 11, 12. It is clear that the pretended correspondence between Abgarus and Jesus Christ is spurious, being made up from passages taken from our canonical books.

[2] Jones on the Canon, vol. ii. pp. 37—49.

[3] Ibid. vol. ii. pp. 50—68.

[4] Ibid. vol. ii. pp. 130—146.

[5] Ibid. vol. i. pp. 226—234.

[6] Ibid. vol. ii. pp. 342—345.; vol. i. pp. 236—251.

[7] Ibid. vol. ii. pp. 393—397.

church received only FOUR GOSPELS.[1] Further, though several of these apocryphal books are mentioned by Clement of Alexandria, as well as by Origen, yet Clement never does it as attributing any authority to them, and sometimes he notices them with expressions of disapprobation. In like manner, though Eusebius mentions some of them, he says that they were of little or no value, and that they were never received by the sounder part of Christians. Athanasius, without naming any of them, passes a severe censure upon them in general; and Jerome speaks of them with dislike and censure.

5. *Sometimes the fathers made use of the apocryphal books to show their learning, or that the heretics might not charge them with partiality and ignorance, as being acquainted only with their own books.*

Remarkable to this purpose are those words of Origen:[2]—"The church receives only four Gospels, the heretics have many; such as that of the Egyptians, Thomas, &c. These we read, that we may not be esteemed ignorant, and by reason of those who imagine they know something extraordinary, if they know the things contained in these books." To the same purpose says Ambrose[3]; having mentioned, several of the apocryphal books, he adds, "We read these, that they may not be read (by others); we read them, that we may not seem ignorant; we read them, not that we may receive them, but reject them, and may know what those things are of which they (the heretics) make such boasting."

6. Sometimes, perhaps, these books may be cited by the fathers, because the persons against whom they were writing received them, being willing to dispute with them upon principles out of their own books.

7. It may, perhaps, be true, that one or two writers have cited a few passages out of these books, because the fact they cited was not to be found in any other.

St. John tells us (xxi. 25.) that *our Lord did many other things, besides those which he had recorded: the which,* says he, *if they should be written every one, I suppose the world itself could not contain the books which should be written.* Some accounts of these actions and discourses of Christ were unquestionably preserved, and handed down to the second century, or farther, by tradition, which though inserted afterwards into the books of the heretics may be easily supposed to have been cited by some later writers, though at the same time they esteemed the books which contained them uninspired, and not of the canon. This was the case with respect to Jerome's citing the Hebrew Gospel, which he certainly looked upon as spurious and apocryphal.

III. The INTERNAL EVIDENCE for the spuriousness of these productions is much stronger than the external evidence: for, independently of the total absence of all those criteria of genuineness, which (it has been shown in the preceding part of this volume) are clearly to be seen in the canonical books, it is evident that the apocryphal productions, ascribed to the apostles, are utterly unworthy of notice; for, 1. They either propose or support some doctrine or practice contrary to those which are certainly known to be true;—2. They are filled with absurd, unimportant, impertinent, and frivolous details;—3. They relate both useless and improbable miracles;—

[1] Origen, Comment. in Matt. lib. i. in Eusebius's Eccles. Hist. lib. vi. c. 25.; and in Philocal. c. 5.

[2] Legimus, ne quid ignorare videremur, propter eos qui se putant aliquid scire, si ista cognoverint. Homil. in Luc. i. 1.

[3] Legimus, ne legantur; legimus, ne ignoremus; legimus non ut teneamus, sed ut repudiemus, et ut sciamus qualia sint in quibus magnifici isti cor exultant suum. Comment in Luc. i. 1.

4. They mention things, which are later than the time when the author lived, whose name the book bears; — 5. Their style is totally different from that of the genuine books of the New Testament; — 6. They contain direct contradictions to authentic history both sacred and profane; — 7. They are studied imitations of various passages in the genuine Scriptures, both to conceal the fraud and to allure readers; and, 8. They contain gross falsehoods, utterly repugnant to the character, principles, and conduct of the inspired writers.

1. *The apocryphal books either propose or support some doctrine or practice, contrary to those which are certainly known to be true, and appear designed to obviate some heresy, which had its origin subsequent to the apostolic age.*

One of the doctrines, which these spurious writings were intended to establish, was the *sanctity of relics.* As a striking proof of this, we are told in the *first* Gospel of the Infancy, that when the eastern magi had come from the East to *Jerusalem*, according to the prophecy of Zoradascht, and had made their offerings, *the lady Mary took one of his swaddling clothes in which the infant was wrapped, and gave it to them instead of a blessing, which they received from her as a most noble present.*[1] As bandages, of a similar nature and efficacy, were preserved in some churches with the most superstitious reverence, the purpose for which the above was written was obvious.

"The corrupt doctrines relative to the Virgin Mary form an essential part in the scheme of some of these designers. Those who believed, or affected to believe, that the Virgin was exalted into heaven, who adopted the notion of her immaculate conception, and her power of working miracles, found but little countenance for their absurdities in the genuine Gospels. It was a task too hard for them to defend such tenets against their adversaries, while the canonical books were the only authority they could appeal to. Hence a Gospel was written *De Nativitate Mariæ* (the Gospel of the Birth of Mary[2]), in which her birth is foretold by angels, and herself represented as always under the peculiar protection of Heaven. Hence in the Gospel attributed to James, which assumed the name of Prot-evangelium, as claiming the superiority over every other, whether canonical or apocryphal, the fact of the immaculate conception is supported by such a miracle, as to leave no doubt upon the most incredulous mind. Hence, too, in the *Evangelium Infantiæ*, or Gospel of the Infancy, the Virgin, who is simply said by St. Matthew to have gone into Egypt, is represented as making her progress more like a divinity than a mortal, performing, by the assistance of her infant Son, a variety of miracles[3], such as might intitle her, in the minds of the blind and bigoted, to divine honours."[4]

In further corroboration of the design of exalting the Virgin Mary, she is sometimes made *to work miracles herself*, is almost always made the instrument or means of working them, and the person applied to, and receiving the praise of the work, while Joseph stands by as an unconcerned spectator, and is never mentioned. But what is most remarkable is, that she is canonised, and called always (not only by the author of the Gospel, but by those who were perfect strangers to her before in Egypt, and elsewhere), *diva Maria* and *diva sancta Maria;* which we know not how better to translate, than in the language of her worshippers, the *Lady St. Mary.* And aged Simeon in his prayer, which is here chap. ii. v. 25.[5] and recorded in Luke

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[1] Infancy, iii. 2. Apoc. New Test. pp. 2, 3. It may be proper to state that the translations of the spurious gospels, acts, and epistles, contained in the publication here cited, are taken *without* acknowledgment from Mr. Jones's New Method of settling the Canon, though divided into *chapters* (which are *different* from his), and also into *verses*, in imitation of the editions of the genuine New Testament. The translation of the epistles of the apostolic fathers (which form no part of our inquiry) is acknowledged to be that of Archbishop Wake, and is divided into verses in a similar manner.

[2] Apoc. New Test. pp. 1—8.

[3] 1 Infancy, v. vi. Apoc. New Test. pp. 25—28.

[4] Maltby's Illustrations of the Truth of the Christian Religion, p. 40.

[5] Apoc. New Test. p. 23.

ii. 28—34. is introduced as stretching out his hands towards her, as though he worshipped her. But of all this the first ages were ignorant; nor in the first centuries after Christ do we find any thing of this prodigious deference to the Virgin: this was an invention of later ages, and was not heard of in the church before the fourth or fifth century, nor was it so common as this book supposes till some centuries after.

2. Whoever has perused with *candour and attention* the memoirs of the four evangelists, cannot but be struck with the natural and artless manner in which they relate every fact. They never stop to think how this or that occurrence may be set off to most advantage, or how any thing unfavourable to themselves may be palliated. Nothing ludicrous, no impertinent or trifling circumstances are recorded by them. Every thing, on the contrary, proves that they derived the facts which they have related from infallible and indisputable sources of information. Far different was the conduct of the compilers of the apocryphal gospels. The *unimportant, impertinent, and frivolous details,* with which their pages are filled, plainly prove that they were not possessed of any real and authentic information upon the subject, which they undertake to elucidate; and clearly invalidate their pretensions as eye-witnesses of the transactions which attended the introduction of the religion of Jesus Christ.

Thus, in the pseudo-gospel of the Birth of Mary[1], we have an idle tale of Christ's ascending the stairs of the temple by a miracle at three years of age, and of angels ministering to Mary in her infancy.[2] So in the Prot-evangelion, ascribed to James the Less[3], we are presented with a dull and silly dialogue, between the mother of Mary and her waiting-maid Judith, and with another equally impertinent between the parents of Mary.[4] We have also in the same performance an account of Mary being fed by angels[5], and a grave consultation of priests concerning the making of a veil for the temple.[6] The pseudo-gospel of the Infancy, and that ascribed to the apostle Thomas, present childish relations of our Saviour's infancy and education, of *vindictive* and *mischievous* miracles wrought by him, of his learning the alphabet, &c. &c.[7]

3. In the pseudo-gospels of Mary, of the Infancy, and of Thomas (which have been already cited), *numerous miracles are ascribed to the mother of Jesus, or to himself in his infancy, which are both* USELESS *and* IMPROBABLE.

The proper effect and design of a miracle is to mark clearly the divine interposition; and, as we have already seen[8], the manner and circumstance of such interference must be marked with a dignity and solemnity befitting the more immediate presence of the Almighty. When, therefore, we observe any miraculous acts attributed to persons, not exercising such a commission, performed upon frivolous or improper occasions, or marked by any circumstance of levity or inanity, we conclude that the report of such miracles is unworthy our attention, and that the reporters of them are to be suspected of gross error or intentional deceit. Thus we smile with contempt at the prodigies of a writer, who gravely relates, as a stupendous miracle, that a child at the age of three years, ascended without assistance the steps of the temple at Jerusalem, which were half a cubit each in height.[9] In the same Gospel, in supposed

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[1] Ch. iv. 6. Apoc. New Test. p. 4. [2] Ibid. v. 2.
[3] Prot-evangelion, ii. 2—6. Apoc. New Test. p. 9. [4] Ibid. vii. 2—4. p. 11.
[5] Ibid. viii. 2. p. 12. [6] Ibid. ix. 1—4. p. 13.
[7] Apoc. New Test. pp. 21—43. Mr. Jones has given a list of thirty-two trifling and absurd stories which are found in the pseudo-gospels of the Infancy, *different from the above.* On the Canon, vol. ii. pp. 246—249. and in pp. 152, 153. he has given *twelve* others from the Prot-evangelion, and the Gospel of Mary. See also pp. 347. 404—406. 454.
[8] See pp. 208. 214, 215. *suprà.*
[9] Gospel of Mary, iv. 6. Apoc. New Test. p. 4. v. 13—17. Ibid. p. 5.

accommodation to a prophecy of Isaiah, which is most grossly misinterpreted, a declaration from heaven is alleged to have taken place in favour of Joseph the reputed father of Jesus, similar to that which, upon the strongest grounds, we believe to have been made in honour of Jesus at his baptism. The bandage which was mentioned in p. 516. as having been presented by Mary to the magi, is, of course, represented as the instrument of a miracle, being cast into a fire yet not consumed. In another of these ingenious productions, when Elizabeth wished to shelter her infant son from the persecution of Herod, she is said to have been thus wonderfully preserved:—"*Elizabeth also hearing that her son John was about to be searched for, took him and went up into the mountains, and looked around for a place to hide him; and there was no secret place to be found. Then she groaned within herself, and said, 'O mountain of the Lord, receive the mother with the child.' For Elizabeth could not climb up. And instantly the mountain was divided and received them. And there appeared an angel of the Lord to preserve them.*"[1] Various miracles are said to be wrought both by Mary and her Son, particularly by the latter, who is represented as employing his powers to assist Joseph in his trade (he being but a bungling carpenter), especially when he had made articles of furniture of wrong dimensions.[2] The various silly miracles attributed to the apostles, throughout these writings, are so many arguments to prove that the compilations containing them are apocryphal, —or more correctly spurious; and that they are either the productions of the weakest of men, who were fondly credulous of every report, and had not discretion enough to distinguish between sense and nonsense, or between that which was credible and that which was utterly unworthy of credit; or else that these compilations are the artful contrivance of some who were more zealous than honest, and who thought by these strange stories to gain credit to their new religion.

4. *Things are mentioned, which are later than the time in which the author lived, whose name the book bears.*

Thus the Epistle under the name of our Saviour to Abgarus[3] is manifestly a forgery, for it relates *that to have been done by Christ, which could not possibly have been done till a considerable time after Christ's ascension.* Thus, in the beginning of the Epistle *a passage is cited out of St. John's Gospel,* which was not written till a considerable time after our Lord's ascension: the words are, *Abgarus, you are happy, forasmuch as you have believed on me whom you have not seen;* for it is written concerning me, *That those who have seen me should not believe on me, that they who have not seen might believe and live.* This is a manifest allusion to those words of our Saviour to Thomas. (John xx. 29.) *Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet*

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[1] Prot-evangelion, xvi. 3—8. Apoc. New. Test. p. 19.

[2] "And Joseph, wheresoever he went in the city, took the Lord Jesus with him, where he was sent for to work, to make gates, or milk-pails, or sieves, or boxes; the Lord Jesus was with him, wheresoever he went. And as often as Joseph had any thing in his work to make longer or shorter, or wider or narrower, the Lord Jesus would stretch his hand towards it, and presently it became as Joseph would have it, so that he had no need to finish any thing with his own hands, for he was not very skilful at his carpenter's trade. On a certain time the king of Jerusalem sent for him, and said, 'I would have thee make me a throne, of the same dimensions with that place in which I commonly sit.' Joseph obeyed, and forthwith began the work, and continued two years in the king's palace, before he finished it. And when he came to fix it in its place, he found it wanted two spans on each side of the appointed measure. Which when the king saw, he was very angry with Joseph; and Joseph, afraid of the king's anger, went to bed without his supper, taking not any thing to eat. Then the Lord Jesus asked him, 'What he was afraid of?' Joseph replied, 'Because I have lost my labour in the work which I have been about these two years.' Jesus said to him, 'Fear not, neither be cast down; do thou lay hold on one side of the throne, and I will the other, and we will bring it to its just dimensions.' And when Joseph had done as the Lord Jesus said, and each of them had with strength drawn his side, the throne obeyed, and was brought to the proper dimensions of the place; which miracle, when they who stood by saw, they were astonished, and praised God. The throne was made of the same wood which was in being in Solomon's time, viz. wood adorned with various shapes and figures." 1 Infancy, xvi. (xxxviii. xxxix. of the chapters adopted by Jones and other writers.) Apoc. New. Test. p. 36.

[3] Apoc. New Test. p. 44.

have believed. Here indeed that which the Epistle says is written concerning Christ, but in no other passage of the New Testament. The same proof of forgery occurs in the Gospel of Nicodemus [1], in which the Jews style Pilate *your highness*, — a title which was not known to the Jews or used among them at that time; — in the story of Christ going down into hell to recover and bring thence the patriarchs [2]; — in the profound veneration paid to the sign of the cross, particularly the practice of signing with the sign of the cross, which is here said to be done by Charinus and Lenthius [3], before they enter upon their relation of the divine mysteries; — and in Christ's making the sign of the cross upon Adam and upon all the saints in hell [4] before he delivered them from that state. It is to be observed that the practice of signing with the cross, though very common in the fourth and following centuries, was not at all known till towards the end of the second century, when it was mentioned by Tertullian. Similar anachronisms are pointed out by Mr. Jones in various parts of his New Method of settling the Canonical Authority of the New Testament, to which want of room compels us necessarily to refer the reader. See also § 1. p. 516. *suprà*, for some additional instances of anachronism.

5. *The style of the authors of the New Testament, we have already seen* [5], *is an indisputable proof of its authenticity. Whereas the style of the pseudo-evangelical compilations is totally different from, or contrary to, that of the genuine writings of the author or authors whose names they bear. Every page of the apocryphal New Testament confirms this remark; but especially the pretended Gospel of Nicodemus, and the Epistles of Paul to Seneca.*

(1.) *The names* given in the pseudo-gospel of Nicodemus to those who are represented as being Jews, *are not Jewish, but either Greek, Roman, or of other foreign countries.* Such are the names of Summas, Datam, Alexander, Cyrus [6], Asterius, Antonius, Carus or Cyrus, Crippas or Crispus [7], Charinus, and Lenthius [8], which evidently indicate imposture. Further, the Gospel of Nicodemus is not extant in Greek; that which is now extant is evidently a translation into very bald and barbarous Latin.[9]

(2.) Nothing can be more unlike the known style of the confessedly genuine Epistles, than is the style of the spurious Epistles bearing the names of Paul and Seneca, in the apocryphal New Testament.[10] This is so obvious to every one who is at all acquainted with those two writers, that it is unnecessary to multiply examples. The Epistles attributed to Paul have not the least vestige of his gravity, but are rather compliments and instructions. Further, the *subscriptions* of the letters are very unlike those used by the supposed authors in their genuine Epistles. Thus, in the first Epistle of Seneca, the subscription is, *Bene te valere, frater, cupio*, I wish your welfare, *my brother* [11], — which was an appellation exclusively in use among Christians. And in Paul's fifth Epistle to Seneca, he concludes with, *Vale, devotissime magister*, — *Farewell, most respected master* [12]; which is not only contradictory to Paul's usual mode of concluding his letters, but also most barbarous Latinity, such as did not exist in the Roman language till several hundred years after the time of Paul and Seneca.

6. *The apocryphal books ascribed to the apostles and evangelists contain direct contradictions to authentic history both sacred and profane.*

Thus, in the beginning of the Epistle of Abgarus [13], that monarch is made to confess his faith in Christ as God, or as the Son of God; in the latter part he invites Christ to dwell with him in his city, because of the malice of Jews, who intended him mischief. Now this is a plain contradiction; for had he really thought him God

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[1] Nicodemus i. 7. Ibid. p. 45.
[2] Ibid. xvii.—xix. pp. 65—67.
[3] Ibid. xii. 24. p. 61.
[4] Ibid. xix. 11.
[5] See pp. 94—96. *suprà.*
[6] Nicodemus i. 1. Apoc. New Test. p. 45.
[7] Ibid. ii. 12. p. 47.
[8] Ibid. xii. 24. xxi. pp. 61. 69.
[9] Jones on the Canon, vol. ii. p. 352.
[10] Apoc. New Test. pp. 74—78.
[11] Ibid. p. 75.
[12] Ibid. p. 77.
[13] Ibid. p. 44.

he must certainly think him possessed of Almighty power, and consequently to be in no need of the protection of his city. This seems to be as clear a demonstration as subjects of this sort are capable of receiving; nor are we aware of any objection that can be made, unless it be that Peter, who had confessed him to be the Son of God (Matt. xvi. 16.), yet when he came to be apprehended thought it necessary to interpose with human force to attempt his rescue. (Matt. xxvi. 51. compared with John xviii. 10.) To which it is easy to answer, that whatever opinion Peter, or indeed any of the apostles, had of Christ before this time, they seem now to have changed it, and by the prospects of his danger and death to have grown cool in their opinion of his Almighty power, else they would never all have forsaken him at his crucifixion as they did. But nothing of this can be supposed in the case of Abgarus, who cannot be imagined to have altered his sentiments in the interval of writing so short an epistle.

Again, *several parts of the above-cited letters, which profess to be addressed to Seneca, suppose Paul to have been at Rome at the time of writing them; whereas others imply the contrary*. That he was then at Rome is implied in the first words of the first letter, in which Seneca tells Paul, that he supposed he had been told the discourse that passed the day before between him and Lucilius by some Christians who were present; as also in the first words of Paul's Epistle, and that part of Seneca's second, where he tells him, He would endeavour to introduce him to Cæsar, and that he would confer with him, and read over together some parts of his writings: and in that part of Paul's second, where he hopes for Seneca's company, and in several other places. But, on the other hand, several parts of the letters suppose Paul not at Rome, as where Seneca (Epist. iii.) complains of his staying so long away, and both Paul and Seneca are made to date their letters, when such and such persons were consuls: see Paul's fifth and sixth, and Seneca's sixth, seventh, and eighth Epistles. Now, had they *both* been in the same city, nothing can be more unreasonable than to suppose that they would have dated thus: what need could there be to inform each other who were consuls? Paul, therefore, is supposed to be and not to be at Rome at the same time, which is a manifest contradiction. Besides this contradiction, the very dating of their letters by consulships seems to be no small evidence of their spuriousness, because it was a thing utterly unknown that any persons ever did so; nor does one such instance occur in the Epistles of Seneca, Cicero, or any other writer. To which we may add, that, in these letters, there are *several mistakes* in the names of the consuls who are mentioned; which clearly prove that these Epistles could not have been written by Paul and Seneca. Another circumstances which proves the Epistles ascribed to the apostle to be a gross forgery, is that the latter is introduced as intreating Seneca not to venture to say any thing more concerning him or the Christian religion to Nero, lest he should offend him.[1] Now it is utterly improbable that Paul would obstruct Seneca in his intentions of recommending Christianity to the emperor Nero; and it is directly contrary to his known and constant zeal and endeavours for its propagation. Would he not rather have rejoiced in so probable an opportunity of spreading the knowledge of Christ, and by the means of one so near to, and so much in favour with, the emperor, have procured the liberty for himself and the other Christian converts of exercising their religion freely? To imagine the contrary is to suppose the apostle at once defective in his regards to himself and the whole body of Christians, and acting in direct contradiction to the whole of his conduct, and zealous endeavours to advance the interests of Christianity. But, besides, it has happened here, as commonly in such cases: want of memory betrays the forgery. Although the author, so unlike Paul, in this place wishes not to discover the Christian religion to the emperor, yet in another Epistle, viz. the sixth of Paul, he is made to advise Seneca to take convenient opportunities of insinuating the Christian religion, and things in favour of it, to Nero and his family; than which nothing can be a more manifest contradiction.

Similar gross and glaring contradictions occur in the Gospel of Nicodemus. To instance only one or two, which are very notorious. In chap. ii. 14.[2], the twelve men, Eliezer, Asterius, Antonius, &c. declare themselves to be no proselytes, but born Jews; when Pilate tendered them an oath, and would have had them swear by the life of Cæsar, they refused, because, they say, we have a law that forbids our

[1] Epist. viii. Apoc. New Test. p. 76. [2] Apoc. New Test. p. 48.

swearing, and makes it sinful to swear; yet, in ch. iv. 7., the elders, scribes, priests, and Levites are brought in swearing by the life of Cæsar without any scruple [1]; and in ch. ii. 23.[2] they make others, who were Jews, swear by the God of Israel; and Pilate gives an oath to a whole assembly of the scribes, chief priests, &c. ch. xxii. 3.[3] This seems a manifest contradiction. Another is, that in ch. xi. 15.[4] Pilate is introduced as making a speech to the Jews, in which he gives a true and just abstract of the Old Testament history relating to the Israelites, viz. what God had done for them, and how they had behaved themselves to him. Whereas the same Pilate, ch. xxiii. 2.[5], is made to be perfectly ignorant of the Bible, and only to have heard by report that there was such a book; nor can it be said, that Pilate here only refers to the Bible kept in the temple; for the manner of speech shows he was ignorant of the contents of the book: I have heard you have a certain book, &c., and this is in itself very probable.

Further, this book contains many things contrary to known truths. Such is indeed the whole of it, besides what is taken out of our present genuine Gospels. Who, for instance, will credit the long story, ch. xv.—xviii.[6], of Christ's going down to hell, and all the romantic fabulous relations of what happened in consequence of it? Who will believe that Christ there signed Adam and the Patriarchs with the sign of the cross, and that all the holy Patriarchs were in hell till that time? &c. Besides, in other places there are notorious falsehoods; as that is, to make the Jews understand our Saviour, as saying that he would destroy Solomon's temple, ch. iv. 4.[7], which they could not but know had been destroyed several hundred years before. To make the name Centurio to be the proper name of a man who came to Christ, when it is certain it was the name of his post or office, &c. To make the words of Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 55., *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?* to be the words of Isaiah, ch. xxi.; and to make Simeon (ch. xvi. and xvii.) to be a high-priest, which it is certain he was not.

7. *The striking contrast between truth and falsehood is naturally heightened, when those passages come under consideration which are borrowed from the genuine Scriptures, and, with more or less deviation from the original, adapted to the purposes of the apocryphal writers.*[8]

Thus, the simple fact contained in Matt. i. 19. is expanded through a chapter and a half of the Prot-evangelion.[9] Again, the plain narrative of Luke ii. 16. is not thought sufficient for the great event, which was just before related, and accordingly it is thus improved in the Gospel of the Infancy:—"After this, when the shepherds came, and had made a fire, and they were exceedingly rejoicing, the heavenly host appeared to them, praising and adoring the supreme God; and as the shepherds were engaged in the same employment, the cave at that time seemed like a glorious temple, because both the tongues of angels and men united to adore and magnify God, on account of the birth of the Lord Christ. But when the old Hebrew woman saw all these evident miracles, she gave praises to God, and said, *I thank thee, O God, thou God of Israel, for that mine eyes have seen the birth of the Saviour of the world.*"[10] The short and interesting account, which is given by the genuine evangelist at the end of the same chapter, is considered, by the author of a spurious Gospel, as by no means adequate to the great dignity of our Saviour's character, or calculated to satisfy the just curiosity of pious Christians. We are therefore informed, that Jesus in his conference with the doctors in the temple, after explaining the books of the law, and unfolding the mysteries contained in the prophetical writings, exhibited a knowledge no less profound of astronomy, medicine, and natural history.[11] Hence, too, in the Gospel attributed to Nicodemus, the particulars

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[1] Apoc. New Test. p. 49. [2] Ibid p. 61. [3] Ibid. p. 70. [4] Ibid. p. 53.
[5] Ibid. pp. 69, 70. [6] Ibid. pp. 63—66. [7] Ibid p. 49.
[8] Bp. Maltby's Illustration, pp. 48, 49.
[9] Ch. xiii. xiv. of the edition of Fabricius, but x. xi. of the Apoc. N. T. pp. 14, 15.
[10] Infancy, i. 19—21. (iv. of Fabricius's edition.) Apoc. New Test. p. 22.
[11] Gospel of the Infancy (li. lii. of Fabricius), xx. xxi. of Apoc. New Testament, pp. 39—41. The latter part is so curious, and forms such a contrast to the sober narrative of the sacred historians, and indeed of all serious history, that we cannot resist the temptation of transcribing it. "When a certain astronomer who was present asked the Lord

of our Saviour's trial are enumerated most fully, the testimony of the witnesses both for and against him is given at large, and the expostulations of Pilate with the Jews are recorded with a minuteness equal to their imagined importance. And as, in the genuine history of these transactions, the Roman governor is reported to have put a question of considerable moment, to which our Saviour vouchsafed no answer, or the evangelists have failed to record it, these falsifiers have thought proper to supply so essential a defect. "Pilate saith unto him, *What is truth?* Jesus said, *Truth is from heaven.* Pilate said, *Therefore truth is not on earth?* Jesus saith unto Pilate, *Believe that truth is on earth, among those who, when they have the power of judgment, are governed by truth, and form right judgment.*" [1]

In the Prot-evangelion, there are not fewer than *twelve* circumstances stolen from the canonical books, and in the Gospel of the Birth of Mary *six* circumstances [2]; and by far the greater part of the pretended Gospel of Nicodemus is transcribed and stolen from other books. Nothing can be more evident to any one who is acquainted with the sacred books, and has read this Gospel, than that a great part of it is borrowed and stolen from them. Every such person must perceive, that the greatest part of the history of our Saviour's trial is taken out of our present Gospels, not only because it is a relation of the same facts and circumstances, but also in the very same words and order for the most part; and though this may be supposed to have happened accidentally, yet it is next to impossible to suppose a constant likeness of expression, not only to one, but sometimes to one, and sometimes to another of our evangelists. In short, the author seems to have designed a sort of abstract or compendium of all which he found most considerable to his purpose in our four Gospels; though he has but awkwardly enough put it together.[3]

But the most flagrant instance, perhaps, of fraudulent copying from the canonical books, is to be found in the pretended Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans, almost every verse of which is taken from the great apostle's genuine writings, as will appear from the following collation, which is taken from Mr. Jones's work on the Canon [4], whose translation is reprinted without acknowledgment in the Apocryphal New Testament.[5]

The Epistle of St. Paul to the Laodiceans.	*The places in St. Paul's genuine Epistles, especially that to the Philippians, out of which this to the Laodiceans was compiled.*
1. Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, to the brethren which are at Laodicea.	1. Galat. i. 1. Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, &c.
2. Grace be to you, and peace from	2. Galat. i. 3. Grace be to you, and

Jesus, 'Whether he had studied astronomy?' The Lord Jesus replied, and told him the number of the spheres and heavenly bodies, as also their triangular, square, and sextile aspect; their progressive and retrograde motion; their size, and several prognostications; and other things, which the reason of man had never discovered. There was also among them a philosopher well skilled in physic and natural philosophy, who asked the Lord Jesus, 'Whether he had studied physic?' He replied, and explained to him physics and metaphysics, also those things which were above and below the power of nature; the powers also of the body, its humours, and their effects; also the number of its members, and bones, veins, arteries, and nerves; the several constitutions of body, hot and dry, cold and moist, and the tendencies of them: how the soul operated upon the body; what its various sensations and faculties were: the faculty of speaking, anger, desire; and, lastly, the manner of its composition and dissolution; and other things, which the understanding of no creature had ever reached. Then that philosopher arose and worshipped the Lord Jesus, and said, 'O Lord Jesus, from henceforth I will be thy disciple and servant.'"

[1] Gospel of Nicodemus iii. 11—14. Apoc. New Test. p. 48.

[2] They are enumerated by Mr. Jones, on the Canon, vol. ii. pp. 153—156.

[3] See Jones on the Canon, vol. ii. pp. 349, 350., where the above remark is confirmed by many examples.

[4] Vol. ii. pp. 33—35.

[5] Apoc. New Test. pp. 73, 74.

God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.	peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. See the same also, Rom. i. 7.; 1 Cor. i. 3.; 2 Cor. i. 2.; Eph. i. 2.; Phil. i. 2.; Col. i. 2.; 1 Thess. i. 1.; 2 Thess. i. 2.
3. I thank Christ in every prayer of mine, that ye continue and persevere in good works, looking for that which is promised in the day of judgment.	3. Phil. i. 3. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, for your fellowship in the Gospel, from the first day until now, &c.
4. Let not the vain speeches of any trouble you, who pervert the truth, that they may draw you aside from the truth of the Gospel which I have preached.	4. Galat. i. 7. There be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ, &c.
5. And now may God grant, that my converts may attain to a perfect knowledge of the truth of the Gospel, be beneficent, and doing good works which accompany salvation.	
6. And now my bonds, which I suffer in Christ are manifest, in which I rejoice, and am glad.	6. Phil. i. 13. My bonds in Christ are manifest.
7. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation for ever, which shall be through your prayer, and the supply of the Holy Spirit.	7. Phil. i. 19. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit.
8. Whether I live or die; (for) to me to live shall be a life to Christ, to die will be joy.	8. Phil. i. 20, 21. Whether it be by life or death, for me to live is Christ, to die is gain.
9. And our Lord will grant us his mercy, that ye may have the same love, and be like-minded.	9. Phil. ii. 2. That ye be like-minded, having the same love.
10. Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have heard of the coming of the Lord, so think and act in fear, and it shall be to you life eternal;	10. Phil. ii. 12. Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, &c. work out your salvation with fear;
11. For it is God, who worketh in you;	11. Phil. ii. 13. For it is God who worketh in you.
12. And do all things without sin.	12. Phil. ii. 14. Do all things without murmuring, &c. ver. 15. that ye may be blameless.
13. And what is best, my beloved, rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ, and avoid all filthy lucre.	13. Phil. iii. 1. Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord.
14. Let all your requests be made known to God, and be steady in the doctrine of Christ.	14. Phil. iv. 6. Let your requests be made known unto God.
15. And whatsoever things are sound, and true, and of good report, and chaste, and just, and lovely, these things do.	15. Phil. iv. 8. Whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, &c.
16. Those things which ye have heard, and received, think on these things, and peace shall be with you.	16. Phil. iv. 9. Those things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen,—do, and the God of peace shall be with you.
17. All the saints salute you.	17. Phil. iv. 22. All the saints salute you.
18. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.	18. Galat. vi. 18. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Amen.
19. Cause this Epistle to be read to the Colossians, and the Epistle of the Colossians to be read among you.	19. Col. iv. 16. And when this Epistle is read amongst you, cause that it be, read also in the church of the Laodiceans and that ye likewise read the Epistle from Laodicea.

8. *Lastly, as the credibility of the genuine books of the New Testament is established by the accounts of countries, governors, princes, people, &c. therein contained, being confirmed by the relations of contemporary writers, both friends and enemies to Christians and Christianity (and especially by the relations of hostile writers); so the spuriousness of the pseudo-evangelical writings is demonstrated by their containing* GROSS FALSEHOODS, *and statements which are contradicted by the narratives of those writers who were contemporary with the supposed authors of them.*

Thus, in the fourth of Seneca's Epistles to Paul[1], we read that *the emperor* (Nero) *was delighted and surprised at the thoughts and sentiments in Paul's Epistle to the Churches*; and in the fourth of Paul's Epistles to the philosopher[2], that the *emperor is both an admirer and favourer* of Christianity. These assertions are notoriously *false*, and contrary to the unanimous relations of heathen and Christian writers concerning Nero and his regard to the Christians. The Gospel of Mary contains at least two gross falsehoods and contradictions to historical fact; and not fewer than seven equally glaring instances exist in the pseudo-gospel or Prot-evangelion of James[3], six others occur in the two Gospels of Christ's Infancy[4], which relate things notoriously contrary to the benevolent design of Christ's miracles, and to his pure and holy doctrine, which prohibited revenge, and promoted universal charity and love. Lastly, for it would exceed the limits of this article (already perhaps too much extended) to specify all the absurd falsehoods contained in the spurious writings which we have been considering; — the Acts of Paul and Thecla directly falsify the doctrines and practice of the apostle, concerning the *unlawfulness* of marriage (which he is here said to have taught, though the reverse is evident to the most cursory reader of his Epistle); and concerning the *preaching of women*: — Thecla being said to be commissioned by him to preach the gospel, though it was not only contrary to the practice of both Jews and Gentiles, but also to St. Paul's positive commands in his genuine Epistles.[5] But what proves the utter spuriousness of these Acts of Paul and Thecla, — if any further proof were wanting, — is the fact that Paul, whose life and writings bespeak him to have been a man of unimpeachable veracity, is introduced in them as uttering a wilful and deliberate *lie*. That he is so introduced is evident; for after an intimate acquaintance between Paul and Thecla[6], and their having taken a journey together to Antioch[7], he is presently made to deny her, and to tell Alexander, I know not the woman of whom you speak, nor does she belong to me. But how contrary this is to the known and true character of St. Paul every one must see. He, who so boldly stood up for the defence of the Gospel against all sorts of opposition, who hazarded and suffered all things for the sake of God and a good conscience, which he endeavoured to keep void of offence towards God and man, most unquestionably never would so easily have been betrayed into so gross a crime, as to make a sacrifice of the credit of his profession, and the peace of his conscience, at once upon so slight a temptation and provocation. Nor will it be of any force to object here, that in the received Scriptures, Abraham is said twice to have denied his wife, viz. Gen. xii. 19. and xx. 2. &c, as also Isaac is said to have denied his, Gen. xxvi. 7. &c.; and in the New Testament that Peter denied his Master, and declared he did not know him, Matt. xxvi. 72.; for the circumstances are in many cases different, and especially in this, that Paul appeared now in no danger if he had confessed her; or if he had been in danger might have easily delivered himself from it; to which we must add, that he had undergone a thousand more difficult trials for the sake of God and a good conscience, and never was by fear betrayed into such a crime.[8]

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[1] Epist. viii. in Apoc. New Test. p. 76. [2] Apoc. New Test. p. 76. Epist. ix.
[3] See them specified, and the falsehoods detected, in Jones on the Canon, vol. ii. pp. 147—151. [4] Ibid. vol. ii. pp. 249—251.
[5] Ibid. pp. 400—402. [6] Ch. xiv. xvii. — ii. vi. of Apoc. New Test. pp. 80. 84.
[7] Ch. xix. — vii. 3. of Apoc. New Test. p. 84.
[8] Jones on the Canon, vol. ii. p. 401. Additional proofs of the spuriousness of the apocryphal writings, ascribed to the apostles, are given by Bp. Maltby, Illust. pp. 57—65.

"Such are the compositions which attempted to gain credit, as the real productions of the apostles and evangelists; and so striking is the contrast between them and the genuine writings, whose style they have so successfully endeavoured to imitate. It deserves the most serious consideration of every one, who is unhappily prejudiced against Christianity, or (what is almost as fatal) who has hitherto not thought the subject worthy his attention, whether, if the canonical books of the New Testament had been the productions of artifice or delusion, they would not have resembled those which are avowedly so, in some of their defects. Supposing it, for a moment, to be a matter of doubt, by whom the canonical books were written; or allowing them the credit, which is granted to all other writings having the same external authority, that of being written by the authors whose names they have always borne; upon either of these suppositions, the writers of the New Testament could not, either in situation or attainment, have had any advantages, humanly speaking, which the authors of the apocryphal books were not as likely to have possessed as themselves; consequently, if the first books had been founded upon the basis of fiction, it is surely most probable, that subsequent attempts would have equalled, if not improved upon, the first efforts of imposture. If, however, it appears, upon a candid and close investigation, that one set of compositions betrays no proofs of a design to impose upon others, and no marks that the authors were themselves deceived; while, on the contrary, the others evince in every page the plainest symptoms of mistake and fraud; is it fair, is it reasonable, to ascribe to a common origin, productions so palpably and essentially different? or, rather, is it not more just, and even philosophical, to respect truth in those performances, which bear the fair stamp of her features; and to abandon those, and those only, to contempt, which have indubitable traces of imposture?"[1]

IV. From the preceding view of the evidence concerning the apocryphal productions, which have been reprinted, the candid reader will readily be enabled to perceive how little cause there is, lest the credibility and inspiration of the genuine books of the New Testament should be affected by them. "How much soever we may lament the prejudice, the weakness, the wickedness, or the undefinable hostility of those who enter into warfare against the interests of Christ; whatever horror we may feel at the boldness or the scurrility of some anti-christian champions; we feel no alarm at the onsets of infidelity in its attempts against the Gospel. We know that the cause of Revelation has already sustained every species of assault which cunning could contrive, or power direct. It has had its enemies among the ignorant and among the learned, among the base and among the noble. Polite irony and vulgar ribaldry have been the weapons of its assailants. It has had its Celsus, and its Porphyry, and its Julian. And what were the effects of their opposition? The same as when the 'rulers and elders and scribes' united against it—its purification and increase. It has had its Bolingbrokes and its Woolstons, its Humes and its Gibbons; and what disadvantages has it sustained, what injuries has it received? Has it lost any of its pretensions, or been deprived of any portion of its majesty and grace, by their hatred and their hostility? Had they a system more credible, more pure, better comporting with the wants of man, and with the anticipations of everlasting existence, to enlighten and sanctify man, and to effect the regeneration of the world, for which they were able to prevail on mankind to exchange the system of Jesus of Nazareth? We gain but little from our reading, but little from our observation, if we

[1] Maltby's Illustrations, p. 65.

shake with the trepidations of fear when truth and error are combatants. All facts connected with the history of the Christian religion are confirmations of a Christian's faith, that the doctrine which he believes, will resist every attack, and be victorious through all opposition. No new weapons can be forged by its enemies; and the temper and potency of those which they have so often tried, they will try in vain. They may march to battle; but they will never raise their trophies in the field."[1]

The apocryphal pieces which have thus been considered, have been in circulation for ages, as were many others of a similar kind, which have perished, leaving only their titles behind them, as a memorial that they once existed. Many of them, indeed, soon became extinct, the interest which was felt in them not affording the means of their preservation. But we think that it is of special importance, that some of the spurious productions which either the mistaken zeal of Christians, or the fraud of persons who were in hostility to the Gospel, sent abroad in the primitive or in later times, should have been saved from destruction. Such books as the "Gospel of Mary," the "Prot-evangelion," the "Gospel of the Infancy," the "Gospel of Nicodemus," "Paul and Thecla," &c. &c. are not only available as means of establishing the superior excellence of the books of the New Testament, in the composition of which there is the most admirable combination of majesty with simplicity, strikingly in contrast with the puerilities and irrationalities of the others: — but they are of great service in augmenting the evidences and confirming the proof of Christianity.[2] So far, indeed, are these books from militating in any degree against the evangelical history, that, on the contrary, they most decidedly corroborate it: for they are written in the names of those, whom our authentic Scriptures state to have been apostles and companions of apostles; and they all suppose the dignity of our Lord's person, and that a power of working miracles, together with a high degree of authority, was conveyed by him to his apostles. It ought also to be recollected that few, if any, of these books, were composed before the beginning of the second century. As they were not composed before that time, they might well refer (as most of them certainly do) to the commonly received books of the New Testament; and, therefore, instead of invalidating the credit of those sacred books, they really bear testimony to them. All these books are not properly spurious, that is, ascribed to authors who did not compose them; but, as they were not composed by apostles, nor at first ascribed to them, they may with great propriety be termed *apocryphal;* for they have in their titles the names of apostles, and they make a specious pretence of delivering a true history of their doctrines, discourses, miracles, and travels, though that history is not true and authentic, and was not written by any apostle or apostolic man. Further, we may account for the publication of these apocryphal or pseudepigraphal books as they were unquestionably owing to the fame of Christ and his apostles, and the great success of their

[1] Eclectic Review, N. S. vol. xv. p. 163. [2] Ibid. p. 164.

ministry. And in this respect the case of the apostles of Jesus Christ is not singular: many men of distinguished characters have had discourses made for them, of which they knew nothing, and actions imputed to them which they never performed; and eminent writers have had works ascribed to them of which they were not the authors. Thus, various orations were falsely ascribed to Demosthenes and Lysias; many things were published in the names of Plautus, Virgil, and Horace, which never were composed by them. The Greek and Roman critics distinguished between the genuine and spurious works of those illustrious writers. The same laudable caution and circumspection were exercised by the first Christians, who did not immediately receive every thing that was proposed to them, but admitted nothing as canonical that did not bear the test of being the genuine production of the sacred writer with whose name it was inscribed, or by whom it professed to have been written. On this account it was that the genuineness of the Epistle to the Hebrews, of some of the Catholic Epistles, and of the Apocalypse, was for a short time doubted by some when the other books of the New Testament were universally acknowledged. Upon the whole, the books which now are, and for a long time past have been, termed apocryphal, whether extant entire, or only in fragments, — together with the titles of such as are lost, — are monuments of the care, skill, and judgment of the first Christians, of their presiding ministers, and their other learned guides and conductors. The books in question afford no valid argument against either the genuineness or the authority of the books of the New Testament, which were generally received as written by the apostles and evangelists; but, on the contrary, they confirm the general accounts given us in the Canonical Scriptures, and thus indirectly establish the truth and divine authority of the *Everlasting Gospel.*[1]

No. II.

ON THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

[*Referred to in p.* 202. *of this Volume.*]

THE necessity of the divine inspiration of the sacred Scriptures having been stated, and the proofs of that inspiration having been exhibited at considerable length, in the preceding pages, it is proposed in this place to offer to the biblical student a few additional observations on the nature and extent of such inspiration, the introduction of which would have interrupted the chain of argument in the former part of this volume.

I. Inspiration "is that actuating energy of the Holy Spirit, in whatever degree or manner it may have been exercised; guided by which the human agents, chosen by God, have officially proclaimed his will by word of mouth, or have committed to writing the several

[1] Lardner's Works, vol. v. pp. 412—419. 8vo.; or vol. iii. pp. 121—134. 4to.

portions of the Bible,"[1] without error or mistake. When the Scriptures are said to be thus divinely (or plenarily) inspired, we are not to understand that the Almighty suggested every word or dictated every expression. From the different styles[2] in which the books are written, and from the different manner in which the same events are related and predicted by different authors, it appears that the sacred penmen were permitted to write as their several tempers, understandings, and habits of life, directed; and that the knowledge communicated to them by inspiration on the subject of their writings was applied in the same manner as any knowledge acquired by ordinary means. Nor is it to be supposed that they were even thus inspired in every fact which they related, or in every precept which they delivered. They were left to the common use of their faculties, and did not, upon every occasion, stand in need of supernatural communication. But whenever, and as far as divine assistance was necessary, it was always afforded: so that every such inspired writing is free from error, that is, any material error. "This property must be considered as extending to the whole of each of those writings, of which a part only is inspired; for it is not to be supposed that God would suffer any such errors as might tend to mislead our faith or pervert our practice, to be mixed with those truths which he himself has mercifully revealed to his rational creatures as the means of their eternal salvation. In this restricted sense it may be asserted that the sacred writers always wrote under the influence, or guidance, or care of the Holy Spirit, which sufficiently establishes the truth and divine authority of all Scripture."

II. That the authors of the historical books of the OLD TESTAMENT were inspired is certain, since they frequently display an acquaintance with the counsels and designs of God, and often reveal his future dispensations in the clearest predictions. But though it is evident that the sacred historians sometimes wrote under the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit, it does not follow that they derived from Revelation the knowledge of those things, which might be collected from the common sources of human intelligence. It is sufficient to believe, that, by the energy of the Holy Spirit, they were directed in the choice of their materials; enlightened to judge of the truth and importance of those accounts from which they bor-

[1] Lee's Discourses on the Inspiration of Holy Scripture, p. 28.; — the fullest, as it is the most recently published work on this subject.

[2] "If the Holy Ghost dictated every word, why should Isaiah, who was bred in a court, be more eloquent than Amos, who had his education among herds? Why should St. Luke write better Greek than St. John? Or why should St. Paul, who was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, show more Jewish learning and rabbinical reasoning than the other apostles? Why, as in the writings of uninspired authors, should we be able to distinguish differences not only in style, but also in the train of thought and mode of reasoning and of narrating? Surely the most cursory perusal must force upon us the conclusion that the temper and education of the authors entered in some measure into their composition. Their thoughts, indeed (unless we would degrade them to the level of other writers of veracity and good intentions), must be allowed to be in substance under the immediate direction of the Deity: and though it be impossible for us, who are not inspired, to define how far the Holy Spirit was concerned in suggesting them, yet we have abundant reason to believe that he afforded them sufficient assistance to make their writings *infallible*, and that the measure of his assistance was in proportion to the nature of their subject." Dr. Macbride's Lectures on the Thirty-nine Articles, p. 159.

rowed their information, and prevented from recording any material error. Indeed, the historical books (as we have already shown at considerable length[1]) were, and could not but be, written by persons, who were for the most part contemporary with the periods to which they relate, and had a perfect knowledge of the events recorded by them; and who in their descriptions of characters and events (of many of which they were witnesses) uniformly exhibit a strict sincerity of intention, and an unexampled impartiality. Some of these books, however, were compiled in subsequent times from the sacred annals mentioned in Scripture as written by prophets or seers, and from those public records, and other authentic documents, which, though written by uninspired men, were held in high estimation, and preserved with great care by persons specially appointed as keepers of the genealogies and public archives of the Jewish nation. It is not necessary to be able to distinguish the inspired from the uninspired parts of the historical books of the Old Testament. It is enough for us to know, that every writer of the Old Testament was inspired, and that the whole of the history it contains, without any exception or reserve, is true. These points being ascertained and allowed, it is of very little consequence, whether the knowledge of a particular fact was obtained by any of the ordinary modes of information, or whether it was communicated by immediate revelation from God; whether any particular passage was written by the natural powers of the historian, or by the positive suggestion of the Holy Spirit. Whatever uncertainty some may imagine to exist concerning the direct inspiration of any historical narrative, or of any moral precept, contained in the Old Testament, we must be fully convinced that all its prophetical parts proceeded from God. This is continually affirmed by the prophets themselves, and is demonstrated by the indubitable testimony which history bears to the accurate fulfilment of many of these predictions; others are gradually receiving their accomplishment in the times in which we live, and afford the surest pledge and most positive security for the completion of those which remain to be fulfilled.

III. If the books of the Old Testament, which relate to the partial and temporary religion of the Jews, were written under the direction and superintendence of God himself, surely we cannot but conclude the same of the books of the New Testament, which contain the religion of all mankind. The apostles were constant attendants upon our Saviour during his ministry; and they were not only present at his public preaching, but after addressing himself to the multitudes in parables and similitudes, *when they were alone he expounded all things to his disciples.* (Mark iv. 34.) He also showed himself alive to the apostles, after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen by them forty days, and *speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.* (Acts i. 3.) Yet our Saviour foresaw that these instructions, delivered to the apostles as men, and impressed on the mind in the ordinary manner, would not qualify them for the great work of propagating his religion. It was, therefore, promised, that the Holy

[1] See pp. 120—126. *suprà.*

Spirit should not only *bring all things to their remembrance,* which the apostles had heard from their divine Master; but he was also *to guide them into* ALL TRUTH, *to teach them* ALL THINGS, *and to abide with them for ever.* (John xiv. 16, 17. 26., xvi. 13, 14.)

The truth into which the Holy Spirit was to lead them, means, undoubtedly, *all that truth* which, as the apostles of Jesus Christ, they were to declare unto the world. It does not mean natural, mathematical, or philosophical truth, and it would be absurd to refer the language of our Lord to either of these. But it means *Christian Truth,* — the truth which they were to teach mankind, to make them wise and holy, and direct them in the way to heaven through our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostles knew something of this truth already, but they did not know it perfectly. They were ignorant of some things, and mistaken as to others. But the Spirit was to guide them into *all* truth. No branch of it was to be kept from them. They were to be led into an acquaintance with religious truth in general; with the whole of that religious truth, which it was necessary for them to teach, or for men to know. Must they not then have been preserved from error in what they taught and declared? The Spirit was to teach them *all things:* — not the things of the natural or civil world, but those things of the Gospel which they were as yet unacquainted with. And if the Holy Spirit taught them all things respecting Christianity, which they did not already know, then there was nothing in what they declared of the Christian system, but what they had received, either from his teachings, or from the instructions of Christ, which were of equal validity, or from the evidence of their senses, which could not deceive them; so that they must be preserved from error or mistake concerning it.

The Spirit was also to bring all things to their remembrance, that Christ had said unto them. Their memories were naturally, like those of other men, imperfect and fallible; and amidst the numerous things, which their Lord had said and done amongst them, some would be forgotten. But the Spirit was to assist their memories, in such a manner, that they should have a perfect recollection of whatsoever Christ had said to them. This assistance of the Spirit implied, not merely recalling to the view of their minds the things which Christ had spoken, but also the enabling them to understand those things rightly, without that confusion and misapprehension, which Jewish prejudices had occasioned in their ideas when they first heard them. Unless they were let into such a perfect understanding of the things they were enabled to remember, the bare recollection of them would be of little use, nor would the Spirit act according to his office of leading them into *all* truth, unless they were enabled, by his influences, properly to understand the truths which Christ himself had taught them.

The Holy Spirit, under whose teaching they were to be thus instructed, was *to abide with them for ever,* as the Spirit of Truth, guiding them into all truth, teaching them all things respecting the doctrine of Christ, which they were to communicate to the world. These important promises of the effusion, assistance, direction, and

perpetual guidance of the Spirit with the apostles, were most certainly fulfilled, in all their extent and meaning. They were promises given by Christ himself the great and chief prophet of the church; and to entertain a doubt of their most complete accomplishment, would be to impeach the veracity and mission of the Son of God, and to admit a supposition, that would strike at the truth of Christianity in general. From this examination, therefore, of the nature, extent, and fulfilment of our Lord's promises, concerning the gift of the Spirit to the apostles, does it not necessarily follow, that, in addition to what they previously knew of Christianity, they were led under the teachings of the Spirit into a *perfect* acquaintance with it; and that through his constant inhabitation and guidance, they were infallibly preserved in the truth, and kept from error in declaring it to mankind? The Spirit of Truth guided them into *all* truth, and abode with them *for ever*.

It is material to remark that these promises of supernatural instruction and assistance plainly show the insufficiency of common instruction, and the necessity of inspiration in the first teachers of the Gospel, and we are positively assured that these promises were accurately fulfilled. Of the eight writers of the New Testament, Matthew, John, James, Peter, and Jude, were among these inspired preachers of the word of God; and, therefore, if we admit the genuineness and authenticity of the books ascribed to them, no reasonable doubt can be entertained of their inspiration. Indeed, if we believe that God sent Christ into the world to found an universal religion, and that by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost he empowered the apostles to propagate the Gospel, as stated in these books, we cannot but believe that he would, by his immediate interposition, enable those whom he appointed to record the Gospel, for the use of future ages, to write without the omission of any important truth, or the insertion of any material error. The assurance that the Spirit should *abide* with the apostles must necessarily imply a constant inspiration, without change or intermission, whenever they exercised the office of a teacher of the Gospel, whether by writing or by speaking. Though Mark and Luke were not of the twelve apostles, nor were they miraculously called, like Paul, to the office of an apostle, yet we have the strongest reason to believe that they were partakers of the extraordinary effusion of the Holy Spirit granted to the disciples of Christ; and such was the unanimous opinion of the primitive Christians. Besides, a perfect harmony exists between the doctrines delivered by Mark and Luke, and by the other writers of the New Testament. Indeed, we can scarcely conceive it possible, that God would suffer four Gospels to be transmitted, as a rule of faith and practice to all succeeding generations, two of which were written under the immediate direction of his Holy Spirit, and the other two by the unassisted powers of the human intellect. It seems impossible that John, who wrote his Gospel more than sixty years after the death of Christ, should have been able, by the mere natural power of his memory, to recollect those numerous discourses of our Saviour which he has related. Indeed, all the evangelists must

have stood in need of the promised assistance of the Holy Spirit to bring to remembrance the things which Christ had said during his ministry. We are to consider Luke in writing the Acts of the Apostles, and the apostles themselves in writing the Epistles, as under a similar guidance and direction. Paul, in several passages of his Epistles, asserts his own inspiration in the most positive and unequivocal terms.[1] The agreement which subsists between his Epistles and the other writings of the New Testament is also a decisive proof that they all proceeded from one and the self-same Spirit. It appears, however, that the apostles had some certain method, though utterly unknown to us, of distinguishing that knowledge, which was the effect of inspiration, from the ordinary suggestions and conclusions of their own reason.[2]

IV. From the preceding account of the inspiration of the apostles, the two following conclusions are justly drawn by a late learned and candid writer: —

1. "*First*, that the apostles had a complete knowledge of Christianity, or of the Gospel which they published to mankind. When it is said, that they had a complete knowledge of the Gospel, we mean, that they knew, and well understood, the truths which they were commissioned to preach, and the duties they were to inculcate. Having been instructed by Christ himself, having been witnesses of his works, and of his death and resurrection, and having received the Spirit to *guide them into all truth*, they had a competent knowledge of the various subjects, which they were to preach and publish to the world, to instruct men in the knowledge of God, the way of salvation, and the duties of holiness. They were neither insufficient nor defective preachers of the word of truth. They were at no loss to know what was true or what was false, what was agreeable to the will of God or what was not. They had a complete and consistent view of the whole system of Christian truth and duty; and there was no diversity of religious opinions amongst them. Their knowledge of Christianity was perfect, for they were acquainted with *all things* which it was the will of God should be revealed unto men, to teach them the way of salvation.

"Whether, as is most probable, the apostles had this complete knowledge of the Gospel at once, on the day of Pentecost; or whether there might be some truths and duties of religion, which were not revealed to them until after that time, is of no importance for us to determine. For it is certain, that their knowledge of Chris-

[1] The following are a few of the passages in St. Paul's Epistles which confirm the remark above given: —

1 Thess. ii. 13. *The word of God, which* YE HEARD OF US, *ye received not* as *the word of men, but* AS IT IS IN TRUTH, THE WORD OF GOD. — 1 Thess. iv. 8. *He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God,* WHO HATH ALSO GIVEN UNTO US HIS HOLY SPIRIT. — 1 Cor. ii. 7. 10. *We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery,* even *the hidden* wisdom *which* . . . . GOD HATH REVEALED UNTO US *by his Spirit.* — 1 Cor. ii. 12, 13. *Now* WE HAVE RECEIVED *not the spirit of the world, but* THE SPIRIT THAT IS OF GOD, THAT WE MIGHT KNOW THE THINGS THAT ARE FREELY GIVEN TO US OF GOD: WHICH THINGS WE ALSO SPEAK, *not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth,* BUT WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT TEACHETH. — 16. WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.

[2] Bp. Tomline's Elements of Christian Theology, vol. i. pp. 20—29. 280—289

tianity was complete, long before the records of it in the New Testament were written for our instruction. It is evident, also, that the apostles, in the course of their ministry, were never at a loss what doctrines they were to preach, but had at all times a perfect knowledge of the things which it was the will of God they should, at those respective times, declare. Less than this cannot be inferred from their own declaration, that they spake the things of the Gospel, *not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.* (1 Cor. ii. 13.)

"As the apostles, by means of our Lord's instructions and the teaching of his Spirit, had this complete knowledge of Christianity, it follows that the most entire credit is to be given to their writings; and that they were not mistaken in what they have written concerning it, whether we suppose them to be immediately guided by the Spirit at the time they were writing or not. For, allowing only that they were honest men who completely understood Christianity, it is evident that they must give a true and faithful account of it. Honest men would not deceive, and men who had a complete knowledge of the subjects they were treating of could not be mistaken. If any errors in doctrine or sentiment were admitted into their writings, it must be either by design, or through accident. To imagine that they could be inserted designedly, would impeach the integrity of the apostles, and consequently their credibility in general. And to imagine that they crept in accidentally, would impeach the competency of their knowledge, and supposes that the apostles of Jesus Christ did not understand Christianity: a supposition that can never be reconciled, with the very lowest construction which can be fairly put upon our Lord's promise, that the Spirit should guide them into all truth. Allowing them therefore to be but honest men, it follows, considering the sources of information they enjoyed, that all they have recorded concerning Christianity is truth, and that they were not mistaken, in any of the positions which they have laid down respecting it, in their writings.

2. "A *second* and principal deduction, however, to be drawn from the account before given, and which is of most importance to the subject, is, that the apostles of Jesus Christ were under the infallible guidance of the Spirit of Truth, as to every religious sentiment which they taught mankind;" that is, "every sentiment that constitutes a part of Christian doctrine, or Christian duty. In every doctrine they taught, in every testimony they bore to facts respecting our Lord, in every opinion which they gave, concerning the import of those facts, in every precept, exhortation, and promise they addressed to men, it appears that they were under the infallible guidance of the Spirit of Truth..... Through his influence on their minds, they were infallibly preserved from error in declaring the Gospel, so that every religious sentiment they taught is true, and agreeable to the will of God.

"When they acted as writers, recording Christianity for the instruction of the church in all succeeding times, I apprehend that they were under the guidance of the Spirit, as to the subjects of which they treated; that they wrote under his influence and direction; that

they were preserved from all error and mistake, in the religious sentiments they expressed; and that, if any thing were inserted in their writings, not contained in that complete knowledge of Christianity of which they were previously possessed (as prophecies for instance), this was immediately communicated to them by revelation from the Spirit. But with respect to the choice of words in which they wrote, they might be left to the free and rational exercise of their own minds, to express themselves in the manner that was natural and familiar to them, while at the same time they were preserved from error in the ideas they conveyed.... The Spirit guided them to write nothing but truth concerning religion, yet they might be left to express that truth in their own language.

" It may readily and justly be concluded, that men who were under the perpetual guidance of the Spirit of Truth when they preached the Gospel, were thus under his infallible direction and influence, as to all religious sentiments, when they committed the things of the Gospel to writing, for the future instruction of the church. This is the view of the inspiration of the writers of the New Testament, which seems naturally to arise, from their own account of the way in which they received the knowledge of Christianity, and from what is declared in their writings, concerning the constant agency and guidance of the Spirit, with which they were favoured." The following advantages attend this view of the subject:—

" Maintaining that the apostles were under the infallible direction of the Holy Spirit, as to every religious sentiment contained in their writings, secures the same advantages as would result from supposing that every word and letter was dictated to them by his influences, without being liable to those objections which might be made against that view of the subject. As the Spirit preserved them from all error in what they have taught and recorded, their writings are of the same authority, importance, and use to us, as if he had dictated every syllable contained in them. If the Spirit had guided their pens in such a manner, that they had been only mere machines under his direction, we could have had no more in their writings than a perfect rule, as to all religious opinions and duties, all matters of faith and practice. But such a perfect rule we have in the New Testament, if we consider them as under the Spirit's infallible guidance in all the religious sentiments they express, whether he suggested the very words in which they are written or not. Upon this view of the subject, the inspired writings contain a perfect and infallible account of the whole will of God for our salvation, of all that is necessary for us to know, believe, and practise in religion; and what can they contain more than this, upon any other view of it?

" Another advantage attending the above view of the apostolic inspiration is, that it will enable us to understand some things in their writings, which it might be difficult to reconcile with another view of the subject. If the inspiration and guidance of the Spirit, respecting the writers of the New Testament, extended only to what appears to be its proper province, matters of a religious and moral nature, then there is no necessity to ask, whether every thing con-

tained in their writings were suggested immediately by the Spirit or not; whether Luke were inspired to say, that the ship in which he sailed with Paul was wrecked on the island of Melita (Acts xxviii. 1.): or whether Paul were under the guidance of the Spirit, in directing Timothy to bring with him the cloke which he left at Troas, and the books, but especially the parchments (2 Tim. iv. 13.); for the answer is obvious, these were not things of a religious nature, and no inspiration was necessary concerning them. The inspired writers sometimes mention common occurrences or things in an incidental manner, as any other plain and faithful men might do. Although, therefore, such things may be found in parts of the evangelic history, or in epistles addressed to churches or individuals, and may stand connected with important declarations concerning Christian doctrine or duty, yet it is not necessary to suppose, that they were under any supernatural influence in mentioning such common or civil affairs, though they were, as to all the sentiments they inculcated respecting religion.

"This view of the subject will also readily enable a plain Christian, in reading his New Testament, to distinguish what he is to consider as inspired truth. Every thing which the apostles have written or taught concerning Christianity; every thing which teaches him a religious sentiment or a branch of duty, he must consider as divinely true, as the mind and will of God, recorded under the direction and guidance of his Spirit. It is not necessary that he should inquire, whether what the apostles taught be true. All that he has to search after is, their meaning; and when he understands what they meant, he may rest assured, that [such] meaning is consistent with the will of God, is divine infallible truth. The testimony of men who spoke and wrote by the Spirit of God is the testimony of God himself; and the testimony of the God of Truth is the strongest and most indubitable of all demonstration.

"The above view of the apostolic inspiration will likewise enable us to understand the apostle Paul, in the seventh chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, where in some verses he seems to speak as if he were not inspired, and in others as if he were. Concerning some things he saith, *But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment* (ver. 6.): and again, *I have no commandment of the Lord; yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful* (ver. 25.). The subject of which the apostle here delivers his opinion, was a matter of Christian prudence, in which the Corinthians had desired his advice. But it was not a part of religious sentiment or practice; it was not a branch of Christian doctrine or duty, but merely a casuistical question of prudence, with relation to the distress which persecution then occasioned. Paul, therefore, agreeably to their request, gives them his opinion as a faithful man; but he guards them against supposing that he was under divine inspiration in that opinion, lest their consciences should be shackled, and he leaves them at liberty to follow his advice or not, as they might find convenient. Yet he intimates that he had *the Spirit of the Lord* as a Christian teacher, that he had not said any thing contrary to his will; and that the opinion which he gave was, on the whole, advisable *in*

the present distress. But the apostle's declaration, that, as to this particular matter, he spoke *by permission, and not of commandment,* strongly implies, that in other things, in things really of a religious nature, he did speak by commandment from the Lord. Accordingly, in the same chapter, when he had occasion to speak of what was matter of moral duty, he immediately claimed to be under divine direction in what he wrote. *And unto the married I command, yet not I but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband.* (1 Cor. vii. 10.) This would be a breach of one of the chief obligations of morality, and therefore Paul interdicts it under the divine authority. Respecting indifferent things he gave his judgment as a wise and faithful friend, but respecting the things of religion he spake and wrote as an apostle of Jesus Christ, under the direction and guidance of his Spirit."[1]

No. III.

ON THE ASCENSION OF JESUS CHRIST.

[*Referred to in p.* 257. *of this Volume.*]

THE Ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven, however astonishing it may appear, is a miraculous FACT, which, like every other matter of fact, is capable of proof from testimony. It is not necessary, in this place, again to prove the confidence which is due to the apostolic testimony, because we have already stated its force when treating on the resurrection of Christ. (pp. 248—256. *suprà.*) It only remains to show that the circumstances of the fact contribute to its certainty, by removing every idea of deceit or fraud on the one hand, and of error on the other.

1. *Observe the* PLACE *of his Ascent.*

It was a mountain, the mount of Olives, a spot which was well known to the apostles, for it had been the scene of many of Christ's conversations with them. On an eminence or hill, there was less probability of the spectators being deceived, than there would have been in many other places, where the view was confined and the sight obstructed; and where, if any delusion had been intended, he might have more easily conveyed himself out of their sight, and by a sudden disappearance given room for the imagination or invention of some extraordinary removal from them. But, from this eminence, the view around them must have been more extensive, any collusive concealment of himself from them must have been more easily discovered, a real ascent into heaven more clearly seen, and the ascent itself for a longer space and with greater distinctness pursued, and attended to, by the beholders. So that, if Christ's ascension was to be real, an

[1] Parry's Inquiry into the Nature and Extent of the Inspiration of the Apostles and Writers of the New Testament, pp. 20. 30. London, 1797. 8vo. Bp. Wilson's (of Calcutta) Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, vol. i. Lectures 12. and 13.; and Dr. Doddridge's Lectures on the Principal Subjects in Pneumatology, Divinity, &c. Lectures 137—140.

eminence or hill was the most proper place that could be chosen, from which he could rise, because he could be more distinctly, and for the most considerable space, beheld. But, assuredly, it was the most unsuitable of all others, if any fraud were intended, to favour deceit, and render imposition effectual. No impostor would have selected such a spot, in order to feign an ascension.

2. *The* TIME *must also be considered, when this fact took place.*

It was during broad day-light, while an impostor would have availed himself of darkness in order to effect his escape. Under such circumstances, the apostles might have credited an illusion; but illusion is impossible, when every object is illuminated by a strong light.

3. *Observe further the* MANNER *of Christ's Ascension towards heaven.*

(1.) It was not instantaneous and sudden, nor violent and tempestuous, but gradual, easy, and slow. Romulus was *said* to have been lost in a furious storm of thunder and lightning, and being suddenly missed by the Roman people, they were the more easily persuaded of his translation into heaven: which tale the patricians first invented, in order to cover the suspicion that, during the storm, they had seized the opportunity of assassinating him; though there is not the shadow of a pretence that any one saw his translation. On the contrary, Christ's ascension was public, gentle, and by degrees; so that the eyes of the beholders steadily followed him, rose with him as he advanced higher, and pursued him until lost in the immensity of the height of heaven. The spectators "looked steadfastly towards heaven as he went up," till the cloud had carried him out of their sight.

(2.) Moreover, it is a remarkable circumstance in this account, that he was taken from them, while they were actually near him; while he was in the midst of them, conversing with them, instructing and blessing them; and in the midst of these transactions, "whilst they beheld him," and their eyes were attentively fixed on him, he arose out of their sight into the celestial glory. The apostles, therefore, could not be imposed on, by any sudden and fallacious conveyance of himself away from them.

4. The SENSE OF HEARING also came in aid of sight; for, if any error could be supposed in the latter, it is impossible to admit any mistake in the former. The apostles could not possibly *imagine* that they heard the consolatory discourse by which two angels announced to them that Jesus, who had thus ascended into heaven, would at the last day "so come in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven."

5. *The* NUMBER, *too, of these witnesses is a strong confirmation of their testimony.*

It was in the view of all the apostles. He was taken up, after he had given commandment to them, while they were ALL assembled together, and while they themselves were actually beholding him.

To all these circumstances it may be added, that the evident proofs which (it is shown in the ensuing article of this Appendix) demonstrate the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, also demonstrate the reality of their Master's ascension.

Since, therefore, we have the unanimous testimony of persons, who

by the evidence of their own sight, confirmed by the voice of angels, were assured of Christ's ascension; since they were persons incapable of forming or conducting any artful design; since it was a doctrine, which, if false, could be productive of no advantage to the propagators of it; and since they persevered in asserting it in despite of all the tortures that cruelty could devise or power could inflict; we have the fullest evidence of the reality of Christ's ascension which the nature of the fact can admit, or we in reason can require.[1]

No. IV.

ON THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ON THE APOSTLES.

[*Referred to in p. 257. of this Volume.*]

If the Gospel be the invention of men,—if Jesus Christ has not risen from the dead and ascended into heaven,—the DESCENT of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, together with the effects produced by it, is another fact for which no adequate cause can be assigned. The miracle itself is related in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Taking it for granted that the reader has perused the graphic narrative of the evangelist Luke, we shall proceed to offer a few remarks upon this fact.

1. This amazing and astonishing gift, the gift of tongues, was a miracle, new and unheard of in former ages, and greater or more decisive than any which had been wrought by Jesus Christ himself during his ministry. Demoniacal possessions, or diseases, *might* be counterfeited; even death *might* be only apparent: the reality, therefore of such cures and restorations to life *might* be questioned by gainsayers and denied by infidels. But to inspire twelve unlettered Galilæans (who knew only their mother-tongue, and whose dialect was proverbial for its vulgarity), suddenly and instantaneously, with the knowledge and expression of sixteen or eighteen different languages or dialects, when, in the ordinary course of things, it is a work requiring no small labour fully to understand a single new language, and still more to speak it with fluency and correctness; this was indeed a miracle of the most stupendous nature, carrying with it the most overpowering and irresistible conviction, the simplest and plainest in itself, and utterly impossible to be counterfeited. For, if the apostles had expressed themselves improperly, or with a bad accent, as most people do when they speak a living language which is not natural to them, the hearers, who at that time were not converted to Christianity, would have suspected some fraud, would have taken notice of such faults, and would have censured them; but since no such objections were made, we are justified in concluding that they had no ground for censure.

[1] Anspach, Cours d'Etudes de la Religion Chrétienne, Part II. tome ii. pp. 401—406. Chandler's Sermons, vol. i. Serm. 11.

In this miracle there was no room either for collusion or deception. "No juggling conspiracy could enable men to speak suddenly a great variety of languages, with which they had previously been unacquainted, nor could any deception be practised upon those who heard them speak. Jews and proselytes, from many different parts of the world, were then assembled at Jerusalem, to each of whom was obviously familiar the language of the country where he ordinarily resided. When a man addressed them, they would severally know whether he spoke in their native tongue or not. A Roman Jew or proselyte could not be ignorant whether what he heard was Latin; nor could any argument convince a Cretan Jew or proselyte that an apostle, though speaking his native Syriac" [or Aramæan] "was yet all the while uttering Greek. Deception was plainly quite out of the question. A Phrygian Jew might rashly fancy that the men were full of new wine, and were mere unintelligible babblers, so long as he heard any of them addressing the Roman strangers in Latin; and the same opinion might be hastily taken up by a Cretan Jew, if listening to an apostle as he spoke to a Mede or an Elamite in their respective tongues. But when each heard himself addressed in his own language by this apostle or by that apostle, he could have no doubt as to the language employed. He *must* know whether he heard his own tongue or whether he did not hear it. However the faculty might have been attained, he could not but see that it was actually possessed. The fact, presented to the general attention of all Jerusalem, was this: — Twelve illiterate Jews, most of them Galilæan fishermen unacquainted with any language but their own, are suddenly enabled to address the various strangers then assembled at the feast of Pentecost, each in his own national dialect. That any trick should have been practised is impossible; that any groundless pretence should have been made is equally impossible. The strangers understand them, and declare that they severally hear themselves addressed in their own languages; yet it is notorious that these Galilæans — but yesterday — knew no tongue, save the Hebrew, Syriac," or Aramæan. "How is the fact to be accounted for. Magic, we know, was the ordinary solution of such difficulties on the part of the Jews and Pagans; for, as to miraculous facts, they denied not their occurrence. But it will be doubted in the present day, whether magic could enable an ignorant Galilæan suddenly to speak Greek and Latin. Admit only the reality of the occurrence, and its proper miraculousness follows as a thing of course. The matter plainly cannot be accounted for without a miracle."[1]

It is no wonder, then, that the effect was so prodigious as the conversion of three thousand prejudiced Jews, in one day, to the faith of a crucified Saviour, at Jerusalem,—the very scene of his ignominious crucifixion, and only fifty days afterwards, on the day of Pentecost.

In reviewing the whole of the transaction, this alternative necessarily presents itself. Either the apostles themselves were deceived, in the first place, or they wished to impose on others, respecting the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the miracles which accompanied it.

[1] Faber's Difficulties of Infidelity, pp. 242, 243.

If the mind revolts at the first of these suppositions, on account of its absurdity, the second can scarcely appear more reasonable. Men, who undertake to establish a religion, and to whom credit is necessary, will not invent a fable, which can be confuted upon the spot by all those persons to whose testimony they appeal. They will not place the scene of their pretended miracle under the eyes of an innumerable multitude, in the very midst of their enemies. They will not blend with their recital incidents notoriously false, utterly useless for their purpose, and peculiarly well adapted to convict them of fraud and deceit.

We can easily conceive persons remaining in a state of doubt or unbelief, who take only a general view of this history, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, without giving themselves the trouble to weigh all its circumstances. But will not conviction succeed to unbelief and doubt, if they transport themselves to the very time and spot, when and where the event took place; if they reflect that they are reading the work of a contemporary author, and that the facts related in his book were published throughout Judæa, in Greece, and in Asia Minor, before he composed his history?

In the history of remote ages, the facts recorded not unfrequently borrow their authority from the character of the writer; but, in a recent and contemporary history, the writer is indebted for all his authority to the truth of the facts which he narrates. The book of the Acts of the Apostles would never have been received as a canonical book, if the first Christians had not found in it those facts, which they all believed, and of which many of them had actually been eye-witnesses. And such, especially, were the miracles which distinguished the day of Pentecost.

2. Besides this proof, which arises out of the nature of the fact and the circumstances that attended it, there is another not less striking, which is founded on the connection of this miracle with the events that preceded and followed it.

We have already had occasion to observe the striking difference in the conduct of the apostles before and after their Master's death (see pp. 255, 256.); and this change is the more remarkable, because it was contrary to what might naturally have been expected. But the descent of the Holy Spirit explains to us why the apostles, who were so ignorant and timid when they were instructed and supported by their Master, were filled with so much wisdom and intrepidity, when they seemed to be abandoned to themselves; — why these men, who had fled at the sight of the danger that threatened Jesus, boldly published his divinity in the presence of the very men who had crucified him;—and why Peter, who had basely denied him at the word of a female servant, so boldly confessed him in the midst of the synagogue.

Separate from this history the miraculous descent of the Holy Spirit, and you can no longer perceive either motives, connection, or probability in this series of facts otherwise incontestable. Every one of those facts is contrary to the *common* principles of moral order. The apostles, the converted Jews, as well as those who continued to

reject the Gospel, do nothing which they ought to do, and every thing which they ought not to do. The city of Jerusalem for a long series of years was only a scene of illusion and delirium. We should not endure even the reading of a romance, in which all the personages should be represented as acting like those who are exhibited in the establishment of Christianity.

But, would you give order and connection to the facts? Would you ascribe to all the actors motives, conduct, and a character consistent with nature? Would you render credible a history, the basis of which, after all, it is impossible for you to deny, and the consequences of which it is impossible to mistake? Put in its proper place the visible descent of the Holy Spirit; and this miracle alone will render an infinite number of others unnecessary. You will find in it an explanation of those difficulties which perplex your mind, and which cannot be satisfactorily explained upon any other hypothesis.

3. Observe, further, the intrinsic probability of the miracle, which was wrought on the day of Pentecost—a probability, founded on the agreement of the fact with the known designs and predictions of the author of Christianity.

During his life, Jesus Christ had confined his ministry within the limits of Judæa: he was not sent as he himself declared, "but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. xv. 24.); his doctrine was not to be preached to the Gentiles, until after his death. That mission was reserved for the apostles, and he solemnly charged them to fulfil it, just before his ascension into heaven. But, before they could enter upon their apostolic functions, it was necessary that these timid and ignorant men should receive the Holy Spirit agreeably to Christ's promise, — even that Spirit by whom they were to be endued with power from on high, and guided into all truth. The miracle of the day of Pentecost was then announced and foretold. But, what grandeur, what wisdom, what an admirable selection of circumstances do we see in the fulfilment of this prediction! The apostles were appointed the teachers of all nations; and it was in the sight of persons of every nation, assembled at Jerusalem on occasion of one of the great solemnities of the Mosaic Law, that they received from heaven the authentic credentials of their divine mission. Sent to all nations, it was necessary that all nations should be able to understand them. By an astonishing miracle these men were enabled, *without study*, to speak all the languages or dialects of the East. But the gift of tongues was not conferred on them, merely to accelerate the progress of their doctrine; it serves also to characterise, from its very birth, that universal religion which embraces both Jew and Gentile, Greek and Barbarian.

How closely connected is every part of the evangelical history! How admirably do the means answer to the end! How do the most signal miracles acquire probability by their mutual relation, and by the place which they hold in the dispensation of religion![1]

[1] Duvoisin, Démonstration Evangélique, pp. 161—168. See a full examination of the miraculous gift of tongues in Dr. Samuel Chandler's Sermons, vol. i. Serm. 13, 14.

No. V.

EXAMINATION OF THE DIFFICULTIES ATTENDANT ON THE PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

[*Referred to in page* 257. *of this Volume.*]

"THE rapid and astonishing progress, which Christianity made in the world in a very few years after its publication, is not only an irrefragable argument of its divine origin and truth, but also a striking instance of the credulity of those, who assert that the Gospel is the contrivance of man. For, according to the common course of things, how utterly incredible was it, that the religion taught by an obscure person, in an obscure station of life, and in an obscure country, should in so short a space of time penetrate to the utmost boundaries of the Roman empire! According to all present appearances, how romantic and visionary would the assertions of a private Jew seem to a philosopher, to whom he should declare that the principles of the sect, which he had founded, should be preached to every creature under heaven! That a miserable company of fishermen, from a country that was despicable to a proverb, without learning and without interest, should penetrate into the heart of so many various nations, should establish their tenets in the bosom of the largest cities, and gain converts to their principles in the courts of sovereigns and princes, is a truth not to be accounted for on any principle but that of a signal and divine interposition in their favour."[1] The force of this argument will more fully appear if we take a short retrospect of the progress of Christianity.

Two months had not elapsed after the death of Jesus Christ, when his apostles suddenly presented themselves, and publicly taught in the midst of Jerusalem; whence their doctrine spread throughout Judæa and the neighbouring provinces. Shortly after, it was carried into Greece, Italy, and even into Spain. They founded societies of Christians in the cities of Cæsarea, Rome, Athens, Corinth, Thessalonica, Philippi, Antioch, Ephesus, and in many other regions, towns, and cities; so that, (as heathen adversaries, together with Christian writers, acknowledge,) before three centuries were completed, the Gospel had penetrated into every region of the then known world, and far beyond the boundaries of the Roman empire. Wherever the preachers of Christianity travelled, they declared that the person, whose religion they taught, had been despised by his own countrymen and crucified by the Romans. And, what is more, they preached a religion which was contrary to the pleasures and passions of mankind; which prohibited all sensual indulgences; which indispensably required from its professors temperance, self-denial, and inviolable purity and sanctity of manners, and was diametrically repugnant to the prevailing principles and maxims of

[1] Dr. Harwood's Introduction to the New Testament, vol. i. p. 80.

those times. "It *is* wonderful beyond all example, that a few illiterate Galilæans, issuing from an obscure corner of a distant Roman province, unlearned and unsupported, should, in no long time, overturn the two greatest establishments that ever were erected in the world, and triumph over all the power of every confederated nation, that universally associated to oppose them. Such an astonishing and sudden revolution in the religious and moral state of the world, produced by such agents, could be effected by nothing less than a most signal interposition of God, endowing these his messengers with supernatural powers, and visibly supporting them in the cause in which they were engaged."[1] Indeed, if we contrast the various obstacles, which actually opposed the progress of the Gospel, with the human means which its preachers enjoyed, we must feel the justice of the remark that was made by an apostle: — "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." (1 Cor. i. 27.) For, no sooner was the Christian church formed into a body, than it was assailed by three descriptions of enemies, either all at once or in succession, viz. 1. The prejudices of authority and of human wisdom; — 2. The violence of persecution; — and, 3. The artifices of policy.

I. The progress of Christianity was assailed and impeded by the PREJUDICES OF AUTHORITY AND OF HUMAN WISDOM. From its very origin, the Gospel was "a stumbling-block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness."

1. With regard to the JEWS:—On the *one* hand, we behold that people exclusively attached to the law of Moses, and intoxicated with pride, on account of their being descended from Abraham; their hypocritical teachers, who affected to be models of wisdom, piety, and holiness, usurping the highest influence over the minds of the people, who were blindly devoted to the prejudices which they cherished, respecting the duration of the levitical worship, the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, and the importance of their traditions. And, on the *other* hand, we see twelve men,—from the lowest class of their nation, formerly imbued with the same prejudices, who accused them of making void the commandments of God by their traditions:—Who deeply offended their national pride by telling them that the Almighty was not the God of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, and that the heathen would rise up as witnesses against them, and would be admitted into covenant with God, while they themselves would be excluded from it:—Who announced to them that the levitical worship was about to terminate, and that the Supreme Being was no longer to be adored exclusively at Jerusalem, but that men might offer to him acceptable worship at all times and in all places:—Who substituted for the splendid ceremonial enjoined by the Mosaic law (which was a constant source of credit and of emolument to a host of ministers who attended at the altars) a simple and spiritual worship, which rendered their functions useless, and in

[1] Dr. Harwood's Introduction to the New Testament, vol. i. p. 85.

which every Christian was to be the priest, the altar, and the victim:—Who undeceived them respecting the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, by apprising them, that it is not of this world, and that they must renounce all their ardent hopes concerning it:—Who censured with equal force and boldness their pharisaic devotion, long prayers, ostentatious fasts, and all those exterior observances, in which they made the essence of piety to consist;—and, finally, who excited their self-love, by preaching to them the stumbling-block of the cross. Can any one believe that these were likely means to procure the preachers of the Gospel a hearing,—much less to ensure them success?

2. With regard to the HEATHEN NATIONS, the prejudices opposed by paganism were not less powerful than those entertained by the Jews. Pagan idolatry traced its origin to the remotest antiquity. The most imposing pomp and magnificence entered into its worship and ceremonies. Temples of the most splendid architecture,—statues of exquisite sculpture,—priests and victims superbly adorned,—attendant youths of both sexes, blooming with beauty, performing all the sacred rites with gracefulness heightened by every ornament,—magistrates arrayed in the insignia of their office,—religious feasts, dances, and illuminations,—concerts of the sweetest voices and instruments,—perfumes of the most delightful fragrance,—every part of the heathen religion, in short, was contrived to allure an to captivate the senses and the heart. Amid all these attractive objects, we see, on the *one* hand, a multitude of priests enjoying the most extensive influence, supported by omens, auguries, and every kind of divination to which ignorance and anxiety for the future attribute so much power, while their persons were rendered sacred under that profound idolatry and superstition which had overspread the earth. And, on the *other*, we see twelve Jewish fishermen, declaring that those deities which had so long been revered were only dumb idols, and that they must turn to the one living and true God, the maker of heaven and earth; and who had conceived no less a design than that of expelling so many deities, throwing down so many altars, putting an end to so many sacrifices, and, consequently, of annihilating the dignity of such a multitude of priests, and of drying up the source of their riches and credit. And can any one believe that these were likely means of success? Further,—

On the *one* hand, we see paganism intimately united with political governments, and sovereigns making use of its decisions in order to justify the enterprises even of tyrannical power. More particularly at Rome, under the republic, religion was a political system admirably adapted to the genius of the people, and was not only protected but in many instances administered by the civil magistrate: it grew with the growth of the republic, and seemed to promise itself a duration equal to that of the eternal city. During the imperial government, we see the emperors causing altars to be erected to themselves, in their life-time, or expecting them after their death.

On the *other* hand, we behold a religion, according to which an apotheosis is an act of daring impiety; which, inculcating only one

God, allowed no rival deity to those who embraced it; and which thenceforth necessarily caused *its* followers to be accounted both impious and rebels. Can any rational person believe that these were proper or likely means to cause such a religion to be received?

Lastly, on the *one* hand, we see corruption, the fruit of ignorance, and of error combined with the passions, spread over the earth, the most shameful practices sanctioned by the precepts and the examples of the philosophers, vices ranked as virtues, in short, a state of universal depravity, both moral and religious, which the apostle Paul has by no means exaggerated in the sketch of it which he has drawn; since it is fully justified by contemporary authors, both Jews and Heathens. On the *other* hand, again, behold the Gospel, inculcating a sublime morality which at that time was more difficult to be observed than ever; referring everything to the glory of God, and enjoining the renunciation of passions equally cherished and corrupted, together with a total change of heart and mind, continual efforts after holiness, the duty of imitating even God himself, and the absolute necessity of taking up the cross of Christ, and submitting to the loss of all earthly good as well as to the endurance of every evil. Think, how sinful propensities would rise at hearing this novel doctrine, how the corrupt heart of man would be offended at it, and how horrible that salutary hand must appear, which came to apply the probe, the knife, and the fire to so many gangrened parts; and then say, whether these were likely or probable means to obtain a reception for that doctrine? Does not the success, which attended the labours of the first preachers of the Gospel,—a success not only without a cause, but also contrary to all human causes,—does not this success demonstrate the mighty protection of God, and the victorious force of truth?

II. The VIOLENCE OF PERSECUTION was another most formidable obstacle to the propagation of the Christian religion.

In fact, from its first origin to the time of Constantine, Christianity, with the exception of a few short intervals, was subjected to the most violent persecutions. At Jerusalem the apostles were imprisoned, scourged, or put to death in various ways. Wherever they directed their steps, they were pursued by the Jews, who either accused them before Jewish and Heathen tribunals, or stirred up the populace against them. But these persecutions were, comparatively, only slight forerunners of those which succeeding ages witnessed; and ecclesiastical history (which is corroborated by heathen writers as well as by heathen edicts that are still extant) records ten grievous GENERAL persecutions of the Christians under the pagan emperors, within the space of two hundred and fifty years.

1. The first who led the way in these attacks upon the professors of the Christian faith, was the ferocious Nero; who, in order that he might wreak upon them the odium which he had justly incurred for setting the city of Rome on fire, inflicted upon them the most exquisite tortures, attended with every circumstance of the most refined cruelty. Some were crucified; others, impaled; some were tied up in the skins of wild beasts that they might be torn to pieces by dogs;

and others were wrapt in garments dipped in pitch and other combustibles, and burnt as torches in the gardens of Nero, and in other parts of the city, by night. This persecution, though it raged most at Rome during the year 64, appears to have continued, with little abatement, nearly three years (A. D. 64—67), and to have extended to every part of the empire.

The short reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and the mild and equitable administration of the emperors Vespasian and Titus, gave some rest to the Christians, until,

2. Domitian, succeeding to the empire, began a new persecution, which also continued almost three years, A. D. 93—96. "For this persecution no motive is assigned, but the prodigious increase of converts to Christianity, and their refusal to pay divine honours to the emperor. The extent and severity of this persecution may be conceived from Domitian's including among its victims even his chief ministers and his nearest kindred and relations." The death of this second Nero delivered the Christians from this calamity; and his successor, Nerva, permitted them to enjoy a season of tranquillity, and rescinded the sanguinary edicts of his predecessor.

3. The second century of the Christian æra opened with the persecution, which was commenced in the reign of Trajan, when so great a multitude of believers suffered martyrdom, that the emperor, astonished at the accounts which he received, prohibited them to be sought for; though, if they were accused, he permitted them to be punished. This persecution continued under the reign of Hadrian, the adopted son and successor of Trajan.

4, 5. The fourth and fifth persecutions prevailed under Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius. The apology, addressed by Justin Martyr to the former emperor, induced him to stop all proceedings against the Christians in Europe; but a very strong edict from Antoninus could only quash the persecution in Asia. And under Marcus Aurelius, who credulously listened to the calumnious charges of their enemies, the torture and the cross were in full force against the professors of the Christian faith.

6—10. In the third century, several persecutions are recorded to have taken place. Severus, Maximin, Decius, and Valerian, successively attacked the Christians, and let loose all their imperial vengeance against them. "But the climax of persecution *was carried to its utmost height* in the reign of Dioclesian," which indeed extended into the fourth century. In this persecution, "the fury of the pagan world, instigated by Galerius and other inveterate enemies of Christianity, was poured forth with unparalleled violence, and with a determinate resolution (it should seem) to extirpate, if possible, the whole race of believers. The utmost pains were taken to compel Christians to deliver up to the magistrates all the copies of the Holy Scriptures, that they might be publicly burnt, and every vestige of their religion destroyed. But although this part of the imperial edict, together with that which respected the demolition of the Christian churches, was executed with extreme rigour; yet such were the firmness and fidelity of the Christians, and such their profound reverence for the sacred writings, that many of them suffered the

severest tortures rather than comply with this decree." The human imagination, indeed, was almost exhausted in inventing a variety of tortures. Some were impaled alive; others had their limbs broken, and in that condition were left to expire. Some were roasted by slow fires, and some suspended by the feet with their heads downward; and, a fire being made under them, were suffocated by the smoke. Some had melted lead poured down their throats, and the flesh of some was torn off with shells; and others had the splinters of reeds thrust beneath the nails of their fingers and toes. The few who were not capitally punished, had their limbs and their features mutilated. No war, that had ever taken place, had caused the death of so great a multitude of persons as this tenth general persecution devoured. Almost the whole of the then known world was deluged with the blood of the martyrs. If the Gospel be only the contrivance of man, the conduct of these its defenders is utterly inexplicable.

III. But not only was the progress of Christianity impeded by the prejudices of authority and of human wisdom, as well as by the violence of persecution; it also encountered a formidable obstacle in the ARTIFICES OF POLICY.

As soon as those who had embraced the religion of Jesus Christ began to be known by the appellation of Christians, they were pourtrayed by their enemies in the blackest colours. Jews and Heathens alike united all their efforts to ruin a religion which tended to annihilate every thing that appeared venerable to them, regardless of the evidences which demonstrated that religion to be from God: and they represented the professors of the Gospel as dangerous innovators, the declared enemies of all that was sacred; disturbers of the public peace, profligate and immoral; in short, as persons utterly destitute of religion, and impious atheists. These, unquestionably, are most powerful means of prejudicing nations against a doctrine; and for a long time the church had to conflict with these calumnies.

When the Christians began to indulge the hope of enjoying some tranquillity, after Constantine was invested with the imperial purple, and had declared himself their protector, a new enemy arose, who employed the most insidious artifices against the Christian faith. The Emperor Julian, who had apostatised from the Gospel, in his zeal for the restoration of paganism, left no means or efforts unattempted to undermine the very foundations of the church. Though he refrained from open persecution, yet he connived at that of his officers, who persecuted the Christians in places remote from the court. He endeavoured to reform paganism, and to bring it as near as might be to the admirable methods, by which he perceived Christianity had prevailed in the world. He diligently seized every opportunity of exposing Christians and their religion to ridicule; and exhausted all his powers of wit and sophistical ingenuity to exhibit them in a contemptible point of view. Sometimes, he endeavoured to surprise unwary Christians into a compliance with pagan superstitions, that he might raise horror in their minds or injure their reputation. At others, he sought by all means to weaken the power and influence of the Christians, by depriving them of all places of

honour and authority, unless they would sacrifice to idols, and by incapacitating them from holding any civil offices, from executing testaments, or transferring any inheritance. Among other expedients to which Julian's hatred of Christianity induced him to have recourse, was the endeavour to suppress and extinguish all human learning among the Christians, well knowing how naturally ignorance opens a door to contempt, barbarism, and impiety. With this design, he prohibited them from teaching philosophy, and the liberal arts, and annulled all the privileges which they had hitherto enjoyed. And, lastly, still further to gratify his rancour against the Christians, he protected and favoured the Jews, and resolved to rebuild their temple at Jerusalem: but this attempt served only to afford a further testimony to the truth of the Gospel predictions: for it is related both by pagan as well as Christian historians, that balls of fire repeatedly issued from the foundations and destroyed many of the artificers, and scorched the rest, who after many attempts were compelled to desist from their purpose. These various acts, however, proved fruitless. The Christians, though oppressed, continued faithful to their religion, and the death of Julian after a short reign left the church in safety.

From the preceding view of the progressive establishment of Christianity, it is evident that it was not indebted for its success to the nature of its doctrine, or to the personal qualities of those who taught it, or to the dispositions and prejudices of those who embraced it, or, lastly, to the influence of government. On the contrary, the striking contrasts between the nature of Christianity and the state of the world were such powerful obstacles to it, that they excited against it both Jews and Gentiles. Princes, priests, and philosophers, vied with one another, in making the greatest efforts to extinguish this religion. Means the most insidious as well as the most cruel appeared to be the most certain for the accomplishment of their designs. Persecutions, opprobrium, unheard-of torments, the most exquisite punishments, as well as politic artifices, were employed for three successive centuries, in order to prevent it from establishing itself, and yet it *did* establish itself throughout every part of the then known world. Unquestionably, this great revolution is not to be accounted for by means so contrary to the end. Where then are we to seek for other human means?

Do we find them in the eloquence of its preachers? But they did not possess that human eloquence which surprises and subjugates the mind; and if they had that eloquence, which carries persuasion with it, because it proceeds from a heart deeply penetrated and convinced, it is the seal of truth, and not of imposture.

Shall we seek for them in credit and authority? It would be utterly ridiculous and absurd to attribute either worldly credit or authority to the apostles.

Do we find them in their riches? They had none to offer: besides, they who were desirous of embracing the Gospel were required to be ready to abandon their possessions. Could earthly pleasures promote their success? The persecutions to which the Christians were exposed cut them off from every hope of enjoying them.

Did the apostles possess the means of constraining persons to embrace their doctrines? The first preachers of the Gospel were totally destitute of coercive means, and the nature of their doctrine *prohibited* them from having any recourse to them. Yet all these means were employed *against* them in their utmost force.

If, notwithstanding all these obstacles, and this weakness of its resources, there is nothing inexplicable in the establishment of Christianity, how comes it to pass, since it did spread into every part of the known world, that all the philosophers of antiquity had only a *small* number of disciples? Those philosophers, with all their united knowledge, eloquence, and celebrity, never were able to effect any change in religion, or to produce any general moral reformation in the world; and yet the antagonists of Christianity think it an easy matter that twelve fishermen should have enlightened the world, and persuaded it to abandon its false gods, to renounce its vices, and to follow a man who expired upon the cross, and to die for him!

The establishment of Christianity is a fact so striking, so singular, so contrary to every thing which has ever yet been seen, so disproportionate to its apparent causes, that it was not without reason remarked by a father of the church, that if Christianity established itself without a miracle, it is itself the greatest of all miracles.[1]

No. VI.

A TABLE OF THE CHIEF PROPHECIES RELATIVE TO THE MESSIAH.

CHAP. I.

THE PRINCIPAL PROPHECIES RELATIVE TO THE MESSIAH, WITH THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENT, IN THE VERY WORDS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

[*Referred to in pages* 292. *and* 352. *of this Volume.*]

SECT. I.

PROPHECIES RELATIVE TO THE ADVENT, PERSON, SUFFERINGS, RESURRECTION, AND ASCENSION OF THE MESSIAH.

§ 1. *That a Messiah should come.*

PROPHECY. — Gen. iii. 15. *He* (the seed of the woman) shall *bruise* thy head and thou shalt *bruise* his heel. Compare Gen. xxii. 18., xii. 3., xxvi. 4., xxviii. 4. and Psal. lxxii. 17.—Isa. xl. 5. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.—Hag. ii. 7. The desire of *all* nations shall come.

FULFILMENT.—Gal. iv. 4. When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a *woman* (4000 years after the first prophecy was delivered).—Rom.

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[1] Hey's Norrisian Lectures, vol. i. book i. chap. 18. Duvoisin, Démonstration Evangélique, pp. 177—202. Vanmildert's View of the Rise and Progress of Infidelity, vol. i. Sermons 3. and 4. Anspach, Cours d'Etudes de la Religion Chrétienne, Part II. tome ii pp. 261—273. Vernet, Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tomes viii.—x. Warburton's Julian.

xvi. 20. The God of peace shall *bruise* Satan under your feet shortly.—1 John iii. 8. The Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the *Devil* (that old *serpent*, Rev. xii. 9.). See also Heb. ii. 14.—Luke ii. 10. I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to *all* people.

§ 2. *When he should come.*

Prophecy.—Gen xlix. 10. The sceptre *shall not* depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, *until* Shiloh come.—The Messiah was to come at a time of nearly universal peace, and when there was a general expectation of him; and while the second temple was standing, seventy weeks (of years, *i. e.* 490 years) after the rebuilding of Jerusalem. See Hag. ii. 6—9.; Dan. ix. 24, 25.; Mal. iii. 1.

Fulfilment.—When the Messiah came, the sceptre *had departed* from Judah; for the Jews, though governed by their own rulers and magistrates, yet were subject to the paramount authority of the Roman emperors; as was evinced by their being subject to the enrolment of Augustus, paying tribute to Cæsar, and not having the power of life and death. Compare Luke ii. 1. 3—5.; Matt. xxii. 20, 21.; and the parallel passages; and John xviii. 31. — When Jesus Christ came into the world, the Roman wars were terminated, the temple of Janus was shut, and peace reigned throughout the Roman empire; and all nations, both Jews and Gentiles, were expecting the coming of some extraordinary person. See Matt. ii. 1—10.; Mark xv. 43.; Luke ii. 25. 38.; and John i. 19—45. for the expectation of the Jews. The two Roman historians, Suetonius and Tacitus, confirm the fulfilment of the prediction, as to the expectation of the Gentiles.

§ 3. *That the Messiah should be God and man together.*

Prophecy.—Psal. ii. 7. Thou art my *Son*, this day have I begotten thee.—Psal. cx. 1. The Lord said unto my Lord.—Isa. ix. 6. The mighty *God*, the everlasting Father.— Mic. v. 2. Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Fulfilment. — Heb. i. 8. Unto the *Son* he saith, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Compare Matt. xxii. 42—46.; 1 Cor. xv. 25.; Heb. i. 13.—Matt. i. 23. They shall call his name Emmanuel, that is, *God* with us. — John i. 1. 14. The *Word* was with God, and the *Word* was *God*. The *Word* was made flesh, and dwelt among us. — Rom. ix. 5. Of whom (the fathers) as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is *God* over all, blessed for ever. See also Col. ii. 9.; 1 John v. 20.

§ 4. *From whom he was to be descended.*

Prophecy. — From the first woman, Gen. iii. 15.

From *Abraham* and his descendants (Gen. xii. 3., xviii. 18.); viz. *Isaac* (Gen. xxvi. 4.); *Jacob* (Gen. xxviii. 14.); *Judah* (Gen. xlix. 10.); *Jesse* (Isa. xi. 1.); *David* (Psal. cxxxii. 11., lxxxix. 4. 27.; Isa. ix. 7.; Jer. xxiii. 5., xxxiii. 15.)

Fulfilment. — Gal. iv. 4. When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.

Acts iii. 25. The covenant, which God made with our fathers, saying unto *Abraham*, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (See Matt. i. 1.)—Heb. vii. 14. It is evident that our Lord sprang out of *Judah*.—Rom. xv. 12. Isaiah saith there shall be a root of *Jesse*.—John vii. 42. Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of *David?* See also Acts ii. 30., xiii. 23.; Luke i. 32.

§ 5. *That the Messiah should be born of a virgin.*

Prophecy. — Isa. vii. 14. Behold a *Virgin* shall conceive and bring forth a *Son*. Jer. xxxi. 22. The Lord hath created a new thing on the earth; a woman shall compass a man. (N.B. *The ancient Jews applied this prophecy* to the Messiah, whence it follows, *that the later interpretations* to the contrary *are only to avoid the truth which we profess;* viz. *That Jesus was born of a virgin, and therefore is* The Christ or Messiah. — Bp. Pearson on the Creed, Art. III. p. 171. edit. 1715. folio.)

Fulfilment. — Matt. i. 24, 25. Joseph took his wife and knew her not, till she had brought forth her first-born son. Compare Luke i. 26—35.—Matt. i. 22, 23. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "Behold a *virgin* shall be with child and shall bring forth a son.

§ 6. *Where the Messiah was to be born.*

PROPHECY. — Mic. v. 2. Thou *Bethlehem* Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah; yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel.

FULFILMENT. — Luke ii. 4—6. All went to be taxed (or enrolled), every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, with Mary his espoused wife, unto *Bethlehem*; and while they were there she *brought forth her first-born son.* Compare also Luke ii. 10, 11. 16. and Matt. ii. 1. 4—6. 8. 11.; John vii. 42.

§ 7. *That a prophet, in the spirit and power of Elias, or Elijah, should be the Messiah's forerunner, and prepare his way.*

PROPHECY. — Malachi iii. 1. and iv. 5.; Isa. xl. 3.; Luke i. 17. Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare my way before me.

FULFILMENT. — Matt. iii. 1. In those days came *John the Baptist* preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, saying, Repent ye, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. — Matt. xi. 14.; Luke vii. 27, 28. This is Elias which was for to come.

§ 8. *That the Messiah was to be a Prophet.*

PROPHECY. — Deut. xviii. 15. 18. I will raise them up a *Prophet* from among their brethren, like unto thee.

FULFILMENT. — John iv. 19. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a *Prophet.* — John ix. 17. He is a *Prophet.* — Matt. xxi. 46. They took him for a *Prophet.* — Mark vi. 15. It is a *Prophet,* or as one of the Prophets. — Luke vii. 16. A great *Prophet* is risen up among us. — John vi. 14. This is of a truth *that Prophet,* which should come into the world. — John vii. 40. Of a truth this is *the Prophet.* — Luke xxiv. 19. Jesus of Nazareth, which was a *Prophet,* mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. — Matt. xxi. 11. This is Jesus *the Prophet,* of Nazareth of Galilee.

§ 9. *That the Messiah should begin to publish the Gospel in Galilee.*

PROPHECY. — Isa. ix. 1, 2. In *Galilee* of the nations, the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.

FULFILMENT. — Matt. iv. 12. 17. Now when Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into *Galilee.* From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

§ 10. *That the Messiah should confirm his doctrine by great miracles.*

PROPHECY. — Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. Then the *eyes* of the *blind* shall be *opened,* and the *ears* of the *deaf* shall be *unstopped:* then shall the *lame* man *leap* as an hart, and the *tongue* of the *dumb* sing. — Isa. xlii. 7. To *open* the *blind eyes.* — Isa. xxxii. 3. The *eyes* of them that *see* shall not be dim; and the *ears* of them that *hear,* shall hearken. — Isa. xxix. 18. The *deaf* shall *hear* the words of the book; and the *eyes* of the *blind* shall *see* out of obscurity and darkness.

FULFILMENT. — Matt. xi. 4, 5. Jesus . . . said, "Go, and show John those things which ye do hear and see: the *blind* receive their *sight,* and the *lame walk;* the lepers are cleansed, and the *deaf hear,* the *dead* are *raised* up. — Luke vii. 21. In the same hour, he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were *blind,* he gave *sight.* — Matt. iv. 23, 24. Jesus went about all Galilee . . . healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people . . . They brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those which had the palsy, and he healed them. — Matt. xv. 30, 31. And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were *lame, blind, dumb, maimed,* and many others; and cast them down at Jesus's feet, and he *healed* them. Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the *dumb* to *speak,* the *maimed* to be *whole,* the *lame* to *walk,* and the *blind* to *see.* — Acts ii. 22. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by *miracles* and wonders and signs; which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye know.

As it would swell this article of the Appendix to an undue length, were we to specify *all* the miracles of Jesus Christ related by the Evangelists, we annex (in further proof of the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning them) the following

catalogue of them, from the Rev. Mr. Archdeacon Nares's Veracity of the Evangelists Demonstrated, pp. 283—286. :—

1.	Water turned into Wine	John ii.
2.	Nobleman's Son of Capernaum healed	John iv.
3.	Passing unseen through the Multitude	Luke iv.
4.	Miraculous Draught of Fishes	Luke v.
5.	Demoniac cured	Mark i. Luke iv.
6.	Peter's Wife's Mother cured	Matt. viii. Mark i. Luke iv.
7.	*Multitudes* healed	Matt. viii. Mark i. Luke iv.
8.	*Also throughout Galilee*	Matt. iv. Mark i.
9.	A Leper healed	Matt. viii. Mark i. Luke v.
10.	The Paralytic let down in a Bed	Matt. ix. Mark ii. Luke v.
11.	The impotent Man, at Bethesda	John v.
12.	The withered Hand, on the Sabbath	Matt. xii. Mark iii. Luke vi.
13.	*Many healed*	Matt. xii. Mark iii.
14.	*Many*, and some by mere touch	Luke vi.
15.	Centurion's Servant	Matt. viii Luke vii.
16.	The Widow's Son raised, at Nain	Luke vii.
17.	*Various Miracles* appealed to	Matt. xi. Luke vii.
18.	*Many healed*	Matt. ix.
19.	A Demoniac	Matt. ix. Mark iii. Luke xi.
20.	The Tempest stilled	Matt. viii. Mark iv. Luke viii.
21.	The Legion of Devils cast out [1]	Matt. viii. Mark v. Luke viii.
22.	The Woman who touched his Garment	Matt. ix. Mark v. Luke viii.
23.	The Daughter of Jairus raised	Matt. ix. Mark v. Luke viii.
24.	Two blind Men	Matt. ix.
25.	A dumb Demoniac	Matt. ix.
26.	Power given to the Apostles to heal	Matt. x. Mark vi. Luke ix.
27.	*Many Sick healed*	Matt. xiv. Luke ix.

[1] St. Matthew says two demoniacs, the others mention only one. Probably one was more remarkable than the other.

28. Five Thousand fed	Matt. xiv. Mark vi. Luke ix. John vi.
29. He walks on the Sea	Matt. xiv. Mark vi. John vi.
30. Ship immediately at its Destination	John vi.
31. As many as touched healed	Matt. xiv. Mark vi.
32. Daughter of Syrophœnician Woman	Matt. xv. Mark vii.
33. Deaf and dumb Man	Mark vii.
34. *Multitudes healed*	Matt. xv.
35. Four Thousand fed	Matt. xv. Mark viii.
36. A blind Man cured	Mark viii.
37. The great Miracle of the Transfiguration	Matt. xvii. Mark ix. Luke ix.
38. A deaf and dumb Demoniac	Matt. xvii. Mark ix. Luke ix.
39. A Fish brings the Tribute Money	Matt. xvii.
40. The Man blind from his Birth	John ix.
41. The infirm Woman restored	Luke xiii.
42. The Dropsy healed on the Sabbath	Luke xiv.
43. Ten Lepers cleansed	Luke xvii.
44. Lazarus raised from the Dead	John xi.
45. Blind Bartimeus cured[1]	Matt. xx. Mark x. Luke xviii.
46. *Many blind and lame*	Matt. xx.
47. The barren Fig-tree destroyed	Matt. xxi. Mark xi.
48. The Ear of Malchus restored	Matt. xxvi. Mark xiv. Luke xxii. John xviii.
49. Miraculous Draught of Fishes after his Resurection	John xxi.

§ 11. *In what manner the Messiah was to make his public entry into Jerusalem.*

Prophecy. — Zech. ix. 9. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Fulfilment. — Matt. xxi. 7—10. The disciples — brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and set him (Jesus) thereon (that is, *upon the clothes*). And great multitudes spread their garments, &c. &c. — Matt. xxi. 4, 5. *All this was done*, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, "Behold, thy king cometh," &c. &c.

§ 12. *That the Messiah should be poor and despised, and be betrayed by one of his own disciples for thirty pieces of silver* (at that time the ordinary price of the vilest slave); *with which the potter's field should be purchased.*

Prophecy — Isa. liii. 3. There is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we

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[1] St. Matthew says two blind men. Of whom, doubtless, Bartimeus was the most remarkable.

hid as it were our faces from him: he was despised, and we esteemed him not. — Ps. xli. 9. and Ps. lv. 12—14. Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against me. — Zech. xi. 12. So they weighed for my price *thirty pieces of silver.* —Zech. xi. 13. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them! And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

Fulfilment.—Luke ix. 58. The Son of man hath not where to lay his head. —2 Cor. viii. 9. For your sakes he became poor. — John xi. 35. Jesus wept. — Luke xxii. 3, 4. Then Satan entered into Judas, being one of the twelve, and he went his way and communed with the chief priests how he might betray him unto them. — Matt. xxvi. 14. And Judas went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? and they covenanted with him for *thirty pieces of silver.* —Matt. xxvii. 3—8. Then Judas, who had betrayed him, brought again the thirty pieces of silver, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood; and he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver, and they said, It is not lawful to put it into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the *potter's field,* to bury strangers in.

§ 13. *That the Messiah should suffer pain and death for the sins of the World.*

Prophecy.—Psal. xxii. 16, 17. For dogs (that is, the *Heathens,* whom the Jews called dogs), have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon me. — Isa. l. 6. I gave my *back* to the *smiters* and my cheek to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from *shame* and spitting. — Isa. liii. 5. 8. He was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our iniquities; by his stripes we are healed. He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. — Isa. liii. 12. And he *bare* the sin of *many.*

Fulfilment. — John xix. 1, 2. Then Pilate took Jesus and *scourged* him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, —and they *smote* him with the palms of their hands. —Matt. xxvii. 30.; Mark xv. 19. And they did *spit* upon him and *smote* him on the head. — Mark xv. 25. And they crucified him. — 1 Pet. ii. 23, 24. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not. Who bare our sins in his own body on the *tree* (the cross).

§ 14. *That the Messiah should be cruelly mocked and derided.*

Prophecy. — Psal. xxii. 12, 13. 7, 8. Many bulls have compassed me; strong bulls of Bashan — (that is, the wicked and furious Jews, who like the beasts fattened on the fertile plains of Bashan, "waxed fat and kicked;" — became proud and rebellious) — have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths as a ravening and roaring lion. All they that see me, laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, saying, *He trusted in God that he would deliver him; let him deliver him,* seeing he delighted in him.

Fulfilment. — Matt. xxvii. 39. 41, 42.; Mark xv. 31, 32.; Luke xxiii. 35, 36. And they that passed by, reviled him, wagging their heads. Likewise also the chief priests, and the rulers also with them, derided, *and* mocking, said among themselves, with the scribes and elders, "He saved others, himself he cannot save; if he be the Christ, the chosen of God, let him now come down from the cross, and save himself, that we may see, and we will believe him. *He trusted in God, let him deliver him* now if he will have him." And the soldiers also mocked him, —saying, "If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself."

§ 15. *That vinegar and gall should be offered to the Messiah upon the cross; and his garments should be divided, and lots cast for his vesture.*

Prophecy. — Psal. lxix. 21. They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. — Psal. xxii. 18. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

Fulfilment. — John xix. 29.; Matt. xxvii. 48.; Mark xv. 36. And they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.— John xix. 23, 24. And the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat; now the coat was without seam. They said, therefore, "Let us not rend it, but cast lots whose it shall be."

§ 16. *That not a bone of the Messiah should be broken, but that his side should be pierced.*

Prophecy. — Psal. xxxiv. 20. He keepeth all his bones; *not one* of them is *broken.* — Zech. xii. 10. And they shall look upon me whom they have *pierced.*

Fulfilment. —John xix. 32—34. Then came the soldiers and brake the legs of the first and of the other which was crucified with him: but when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they *brake* NOT *his legs.* But one of the soldiers with a spear *pierced his side,* and forthwith there came out blood and water.

§ 17. *That the Messiah should die with malefactors, but be buried honourably.*

Prophecy. — Isa. liii. 9. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.

Fulfilment. —Matt. xxvii. 38. 57—60. Then were there two thieves crucified with him. There came a rich man of Arimathea named Joseph, and begged the body of Jesus; and he wrapped it a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb.

§ 18. *That the Messiah should rise from the dead, and ascend into heaven.*

Prophecy. — Psal. xvi. 9, 10. My flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in *hell* (the separate state of departed spirits), neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption. — Isa. liii. 10. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, — he shall prolong his days. — Psal. lxviii. 18. Thou hast *ascended* up on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

Fulfilment. — Acts ii. 31. (David) spake before of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in *hell* (Hades, or the separate state); neither did his flesh see corruption. See also Acts xiii. 35. — Matt. xxviii. 5, 6. The angels said unto the women, "He is not here, for he is *risen,* as he said." See Luke xxiv. 5, 6. — 1 Cor. xv. 4. He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.—Acts, i. 3. He showed himself alive, after his passion, by many infallible proofs. — Mark xvi. 19.; Luke xxiv. 51.; Acts i. 9. So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, while he was blessing them, and while they beheld, he was parted from them, and *carried up* into heaven, and sat at the right hand of God. Compare also 1 Pet. iii. 22.; 1 Tim. iii. 16.; Heb. vi. 20.

§ 19. *That the Messiah should send the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.*

Prophecy. — Joel ii. 28. I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.

Fulfilment. — See all these promises and predictions fulfilled in Acts ii. 1—4, iv. 31., viii. 17., x. 44., xi. 15.

SECT. II.

PREDICTIONS RELATIVE TO THE OFFICES OF THE MESSIAH.

§ 1. *That the Messiah was to be a* PROPHET *and* LEGISLATOR LIKE UNTO MOSES, *but superior to him, who should change the law of Moses into a new and more perfect law, common both to Jews and Gentiles, and which should last for ever.*

Prophecy. — Deut. xviii. 18, 19. I will raise them up a *Prophet* from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words into his mouth...... And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. See also Deut. xviii. 15.; Acts iii. 22, and vii. 37.

Fulfilment. — That the Messiah was to be a *Prophet*, generally, see § 8. p. 551. *suprà*; and how closely Jesus Christ resembled Moses, to whom he was also infinitely superior in many respects, will appear from the following particulars: —

(i.) *As to the dignity of his person.* — Heb. iii. 5, 6. Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a *servant*, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a *Son* over his own house, whose house are we. Other prophets had revelations in dreams and visions, but Moses talked with God face to face. Christ spake that which he had seen with the Father.

(ii.) *As to his legislative office.* — Moses was a *Legislator*, and the *Mediator* of a covenant between God and Man. Christ was the *Mediator* of a better covenant than that which was established by the sacrifice of bulls and goats. The one was mortal; the other divine. Other prophets were only interpreters and enforcers of the law, and in this respect were greatly inferior to Moses. This is of itself a sufficient proof, that a succession of prophets could not be *solely* alluded to. The person who was to be raised up, could not be like Moses, in a strict sense, unless he were a legislator — he must give a law to mankind, and, consequently, a more excellent law; for if the first had been perfect, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews argues, there could have been no room for a second. Christ was this legislator, who gave a law more perfect in its nature, more extensive in its application, and more glorious in its promises and rewards. — Heb. vii. 18, 19. There is a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof; for the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a *better hope* (i. e. of a new law) did, by the which we draw nigh to God.

The *Law* of Moses belonged to one nation only, but the Gospel, which is the *Law of Christ*, is designed *for all nations*. The Messiah was to *enact a new Law;* Isa. ii. 3. Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. This new law or covenant was to be *common to all nations;* see Isa. ii. 2, 3. and li. 4, 5.; and was to endure for ever; see Isa. lix. 21.; Jer. xxxi. 34.; Ezek. xxxvi. 27., xxxvii. 26.; Isa. lv. 3., lxi. 8.; Jer. xxxii. 40.; Ezek. xxxiv. 25.; Dan. vii. 13, 14.; Isa. xlii. 6., lxii. 2.; compared with Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Moses instituted the passover, when a lamb was sacrificed, none of whose bones were to be broken, and whose blood protected the people from destruction. — Christ was himself that paschal amb. Moses had a very wicked and perverse generation committed to his care; and to enable him to rule them, miraculous powers were given to him, and he used his utmost endeavours to make the people obedient to God, and to save them from ruin; but in vain: in the space of forty years they all fell in the wilderness except two. — Christ also was given to a generation not less wicked and perverse; his instructions and his miracles were lost upon them; and in about the same space of time, after they had rejected him, they were destroyed.

(iii.) *As to his prophetic office and character.* — Moses foretold the calamities that would befall his nation for their disobedience. — Christ predicted the same events, fixed the precise time, and enlarged upon the previous and subsequent circumstances.

Moses chose and appointed seventy elders to preside over the people — Christ chose the same number of disciples. Moses sent twelve men to spy out the land which was to be conquered — Christ sent his twelve apostles into the world, to subdue it by a more glorious and miraculous conquest.

(iv.) *As to the benefits conferred.* — Moses delivered the Israelites from their cruel bondage in Eygpt; he contended with the magicians, and had the advantage over them so manifestly, that they could no longer withstand him, but were constrained to acknowledge the divine power by which he was assisted. Moses conducted the Israelites through the desert; assuring them that if they would be obedient, they should enter into the happy land of promise, which the wiser Jews usually understood to be a type of the eternal and celestial kingdom, to which the Messiah was to open an entrance. And Moses interceded with the Almighty for that rebellious people, and stopped the wrath of God, by lifting up the brazen serpent in the wilderness. The people could not enter into the land of promise till Moses was dead—by the death of Christ "the kingdom of heaven was opened to all believers." — But Jesus has delivered us from the far worse tyranny of Satan and sin, and He *saves* all who truly believe in him and unfeignedly repent, *from* the guilt, the power, and the punishment of *their sins.* (Matt. i. 21.) — Jesus Christ cast out evil spirits, and received their acknowledgments both of the dignity of his nature and the importance of his mission. He was lifted up on the cross, and

was the atonement for the whole world. He has also brought life and immortality to light. As our forerunner, he hath entered into heaven, that where he is, there his followers may be also (Heb. vi. 20., ix. 24.; John xiv. 2, 3.): and as an *Advocate* he *ever* liveth to make intercession for all that come unto God by him. (1 John ii. 1.; Heb. vii. 25.)

Moses wrought a great variety of miracles, and in this particular the parallel is remarkable; since besides Christ *there arose not a prophet in Israel like unto Moses whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do.* (Deut. xxxiv.) Moses was not only a lawgiver, a prophet, and a worker of miracles, but a king and a priest. He is called king (Deut. xxxiii. 5.), and he had indeed, though not the pomp, and the crown, and the sceptre, yet the authority of a king, and was the supreme magistrate; and the office of priest he often exercised. In all these offices the resemblance between Moses and Christ was striking and exact.

Moses fed the people miraculously in the wilderness — Christ with bread and with doctrine; and the manna which descended from heaven, and the loaves which Christ multiplied, were proper images of the spiritual food which the Saviour of the world bestowed upon his disciples.

Moses expressly declares, "That it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which the prophet shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." The Jews rejected Christ, and God rejected them. In the whole course of the history of the Jews there is no instance recorded, where, in the case of disobedience to the warnings or advice of any prophet, such terrible calamities ensued, as those which followed the rejection of the Messiah. The overthrow of the Jewish empire, the destruction of so many Jews at the siege at Jerusalem, the dispersion of the surviving people, and the history of the Jews down to the present day — calamities beyond measure and beyond example — fulfilled the prophecy of Moses.

(v.) *As to the circumstances of his death.* — Moses died in one sense for the iniquities of his people; it was their rebellion, which was the occasion of it, which drew down the displeasure of God upon them and upon him: "The Lord," said Moses to them, "was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou shalt not go in thither, but thou shalt die." (Deut. i. 37.) Moses therefore went up in the sight of the people to the top of Mount Nebo, and there he died when he was in perfect vigour, "when his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." — Christ suffered for the sins of men, and was led up in the presence of the people to Calvary, where he died in the flower of his age, and when he was in his full natural strength. Neither Moses nor Christ, as far as we may collect from sacred history, were ever sick or felt any bodily decay or infirmity, which would have rendered them unfit for the toils they underwent. Their sufferings were of another kind.

As Moses a little before his death promised the people that God would raise them up a Prophet like unto himself — so Christ, taking leave of his afflicted disciples, told them, *I will not leave you comfortless: I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter.* (John xiv. 18. 16.)

"Is this similitude and correspondence, in so many particulars, the effect of mere chance?" says Dr. Jortin, to whom we are principally indebted for the preceding circumstances of resemblance between Jesus Christ and the Great Prophet and Legislator of the Jews: — "Let us search all the records of universal history, and see if we can find a man who was so like to Moses as Christ was. If we cannot find such a one, then we have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, to be Jesus of Nazareth, THE SON OF GOD."[1]

§ 2. *The Messiah was to be a Teacher, who was to instruct and enlighten men.*

(i.) *Messiah was to be a Teacher.*

PROPHECY. — Isa. lxi. 1. The Lord hath anointed me to *preach* good tidings

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[1] Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. i. pp. 135—150. second edition. See also Bp. Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies, vol. i. pp. 90—101. London, 1793, ninth edition.

unto the meek.—Isa. liv. 13. All thy people shall be *taught* of the Lord.— Psal. lxxvii. 2. I will open my mouth in a *parable.*

Fulfilment.—Mark i. 14. Jesus came...... *preaching* the kingdom of God.— Luke viii. 1. He went throughout every city and village, *preaching*, and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God.—Mark vi. 6. He went round about all the villages *teaching.*—Luke iv. 15. 44. He *taught* in their synagogues; and he *preached* in the synagogues of Galilee. See also Matt. iv. 23., ix. 35.; Mark i. 38, 39.—Matt. xi. 5. The poor have the Gospel *preached* unto them.—Matt. xiii. 34. All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in *parables*, and without a parable spake he not unto them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in *parables.*—Mark iv. 33. With many such *parables* spake he the word unto them. The following list of parables may serve to illustrate the prophetic character of the Messiah as a teacher: it is borrowed from Mr. Archdeacon Nares's Veracity of the Evangelists Demonstrated, pp. 287—289.:—

1.	Of the Blind leading the Blind	Luke vi.
2.	Of the House built on a Rock	Matt. vii. Luke vi.
3.	Of the two Debtors	Luke vii.
4.	Of the relapsing Demoniac	Matt. xii. Luke xi.
5.	Of the rich Man and his vain Hopes	Luke xii
6.	Of the Lord returning from a Wedding	Luke xii.
7.	Of the barren Fig-tree	Luke xiii.
8.	Of the Sower	Matt. xiii. Mark iv. Luke viii.
9.	Of the Tares	Matt. xiii.
10.	Of the Seed sown	Mark iv.
11.	Of the Mustard Seed	Matt. xiii. Mark iv.
12.	Of the Leaven	Matt. xiii.
13.	Of the hid Treasure	Ibid.
14.	Of the Merchant seeking Pearls	Ibid.
15.	Of the Net cast into the Sea	Ibid.
16.	Of the good Householder	Matt. xiii.
17.	Of the new Cloth and old Garment	Matt. ix. Mark ii. Luke v.
18.	Of the new Wine and old Bottles	Matt. ix. Mark ii. Luke v.
19.	Of the Plant not planted by God	Matt. xv.
20.	Of the lost Sheep	Matt. xviii. Luke xv.
21.	Of the unmerciful Servant	Matt. xviii.
22.	Of the Shepherd and the Sheep	John x.
23.	Of the good Samaritan	Luke x.
24.	Of the Guest choosing the highest Seat	Luke xiv.
25.	Of the great Supper	Ibid.
26.	Of the building a Tower	Ibid.
27.	Of the King preparing for War	Ibid.
28.	Of the Salt	Ibid.
29.	Of the Piece of Silver lost	Luke xv.
30.	Of the Prodigal Son	Ibid.
31.	Of the unjust Steward	Luke xvi.
32.	Of the rich Man and Lazarus	Ibid.
33.	Of the Master commanding his Servant	Luke xvii.
34.	Of the unjust Judge and Widow	Luke xviii
35.	Of the Pharisee and Publican	Ibid.
36.	Of the Labourers hired at different Hours	Matt. xx.

37. Of the Ten Pounds and Ten Servants	Luke xix.
38. Of the professing and the repenting Son	Matt. xxi.
39. Of the wicked Husbandmen	Matt. xxi. Mark xii. Luke xx.
40. Of the Guests bidden and the Wedding Garment	Matt. xxii.
41. Of the Fig-tree putting forth Leaves	Matt. xxiv. Mark xiii. Luke xxi.
42. Of the Thief in the Night	Matt. xxiv.
43. Of the Man taking a long Journey	Mark xiii.
44. Of the faithful and unfaithful Servant	Matt. xxiv.
45. Of the Ten Virgins	Matt. xxv.
46. Of the Talents	Ibid.
Perhaps also the following may be added:—	
47. Children in the Market Place	Matt. xi. Luke vii.
48. The strong Man keeping his House	Matt. xii. Mark iii. Luke xi.

(ii.) *Messiah was to instruct and enlighten men.*

PROPHECY. — Isa. ix. 2. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great *light;* they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

FULFILMENT. — John xii. 46. I am come a *light* into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. (See also John viii. 12., ix. 5.) — Luke ii. 32. A *light* to lighten the Gentiles. — Acts xxvi. 18. To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to *light*, and from the power of Satan unto God. — Eph. v. 8. Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye *light* in the Lord; walk as children of light. — Acts iii. 26. God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

§ 3. *He was to be the Messiah, Christ, or Anointed of God.*

PROPHECY. — Isa. lxi. 1. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord had *anointed* me to preach good tidings unto the meek. — Dan. ix. 24, 25. To *anoint* the most holy, — the *Messiah* the Prince. — Psal. cxxxii. 17. I have ordained a lamp for mine *Anointed.* See also Psal. lxxxix. 20. 51. — Psal. ii. 2. The rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his *Anointed* or *Messiah.*

FULFILMENT. — John iv. 25. 42. I know that the *Messiah* cometh, which is called the *Christ.* This is indeed the *Christ.* — vi. 69. We believe and are sure that thou art the *Christ*, the Son of the living God. See also John xi. 27.; Matt. xvi. 16. — Matt. xxvi. 63, 64. The high priest said, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the *Christ* the Son of God;" Jesus saith unto him, "Thou hast said." See also Mark xiv. 61. — Acts xviii. 28. He mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the *Christ.* See also Acts ix. 22. and xvii. 3. — Acts ii. 35. Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and *Christ.* — Phil. ii. 11. That every tongue should confess that Jesus *Christ* is Lord.

§ 4. *The Messiah was to be a Priest.*

PROPHECY.—Psal. cx. 4. Thou art a *priest* for ever, after the order of Melchizedek (cited in Heb. v. 6., vii. 21.).—Zech. vi. 13. He shall be a *priest* upon his throne.

FULFILMENT. — Heb. iv. 14. We have a great *high priest* that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. (See also viii. 1.) — Heb. iii. 1., x. 21. Consider the apostle and *high priest* of our profession, Christ Jesus. — Heb. ii. 17. That he might be a merciful and faithful *high priest* in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. — Heb. vii. 24. This man because he continueth for ever hath an unchangeable *priesthood.*

§ 5. *The Messiah was, by the offering of himself as a sacrifice for sin, to make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to make men holy, and to destroy the power of the devil.*

Prophecy. — Isa. liii. 6 10, 11, 12. The Lord hath *laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Thou shalt make his soul an *offering for sin.* He shall bear their *iniquities.* He bare the *sin* of many. — Dan. ix. 24. To *finish* the *transgression,* to make an *end of sins,* and to make *reconciliation for iniquity,* and to bring in an everlasting righteousness. — Gen. iii. 15. It (the seed of the woman, the promised Messiah) shall *bruise* thy (Satan's) head.

Fulfilment. — Eph. v. 2. Christ hath given himself *for us,* an *offering,* and a *sacrifice* to God. (See also 2 Cor. v. 21.; Rom. viii. 3.) — 1 John ii. 2. He is the *propitiation* for our sins. — Heb. ix. 14. Christ, who through the eternal Spirit *offered himself* without spot, to God. — 1 Pet. i. 19. *Redeemed* — with the precious blood of Christ, as of a *lamb* without blemish. — 1 Pet. iii. 18. Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust. — Heb. x. 12. This man, after he had offered one *sacrifice* for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God. — Heb. ix. 12. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place. — Heb. vii. 27. Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once when he offered up himself. — Heb. ix. 25, 26. Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others. But now, once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the *sacrifice of himself.* — John i. 29. The lamb of God, which *taketh away the sin* of the world. — Acts v. 31. To give repentance to Israel and *forgiveness of sins.* — 1 Cor. xv. 3. Christ died *for our sins* according to the Scriptures. — 1 John i. 7. The blood of Jesus Christ his Son *cleanseth us from all sin.* — Rom. v. 10. We were *reconciled* to God by the death of his Son. — 2 Cor. v. 18. Who hath *reconciled* us to himself by Jesus Christ. — Col. i. 20. By him (Christ) to reconcile all things unto himself. — Heb. v. 9. He became the author of *salvation* unto all them that obey him. — 2 Cor. v. 15. He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them. (See also Rom. vi. 10—12.; 1 Thess. v. 10.) — 1 Pet. ii. 24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that *we,* being dead to sin, *should live unto righteousness.* — Tit. ii. 14. Who gave himself for us, that he might *redeem us from all iniquity,* and purify unto himself *a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* — 1 Cor. vi. 20. Ye are *bought* with a price; therefore *glorify* God in your *body and in your spirit, which are God's.* — 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2. As Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but *to the will of God.*

§ 6. *The Messiah was to be a Saviour.*

Prophecy. — Isa. lix. 20. The *Redeemer* shall come to Zion, and to them that turn from transgression in Jacob. — lxii. 11. Say ye to the daughter of Zion, "Behold thy *salvation* cometh."

Fulfilment. — 1 John iv. 14 The Father sent the Son to be *the Saviour* of the world. — Luke ii. 11. Unto you is born a *Saviour,* which is Christ the Lord. (See also Matt. i. 21.; Acts xiii. 23.) — John iv. 42. We have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, *the Saviour* of the world. — Acts v. 31. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a *Saviour,* for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. — 2 Pet. ii. 20. Have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and *Saviour* Jesus Christ. (See also 2 Pet. iii. 18.) — Tit. iii. 6. The Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our *Saviour.* — 2 Pet. i. 1. Through the righteousness of our God and *Saviour* Jesus Christ. — Phil. iii. 20. From whence (heaven) we also look for the *Saviour,* the Lord Jesus Christ. — Tit. ii. 13. Looking for ...... the appearing of our great God and *Saviour,* Jesus Christ.

§ 7. *The Messiah was to be a Mediator.*

Prophecy. — Psal. cx. 1. The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand. — Dan. ix. 17. 19. O our God, cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary

that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. Defer not for thine own sake, O my God. — Isa. viii. 14. He shall be for a sanctuary.

FULFILMENT. — John xiv. 6. Jesus saith unto him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." — 1 Tim. ii. 5. There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. — Heb. xii. 24. Jesus the *mediator* of the new covenant. (See also Heb. vii. 22., viii. 6., ix. 15.) — John xv. 16., xvi. 23, 24. Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you; hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name. — John xiv. 14. If ye shall ask any thing in my name I will do *it*.

§ 8. *The Messiah was to be an Intercessor.*

PROPHECY.—Isa. liii. 12. He made *intercession* for the transgressors.

FULFILMENT. — Luke xxiii. 34. Jesus said, *Father forgive them; for they know not what they do.* — Heb. ix. 24. Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to *appear* in the presence of God *for us*. — 1 John ii. 1. If any man sin, we have an *advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. — Rom. viii. 34. Christ, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh *intercession* for us. — Heb. vii. 25. He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make *intercession* for them.

§ 9. *Messiah was to be a Shepherd.*

PROPHECY. — Isa. xl. 11. He shall feed his flock like a *shepherd*, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. — Ezek. xxxiv. 23. I will set up one *shepherd* over them, even my servant David. (See also Ezek. xxxvii. 24.)

FULFILMENT. — John x. 14. 16. I am the good *shepherd*, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. Other *sheep* (that is, the Gentiles) I have, which are not of this fold . . . and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one *shepherd*. — Heb. xiii. 20. Our Lord Jesus, that great *shepherd* of the sheep. — 1 Pet. ii. 25. Ye are now returned unto the *shepherd* and bishop of your souls. — 1 Pet. v. 1, 2. 4. The elders, I exhort, feed the flock of God; and when the *chief shepherd* shall appear ye shall receive a crown.

§ 10. *Messiah was to be a king, superior to all others, the head and ruler of the church, and more particularly exalted as a king, after his sufferings and resurrection.*

(i.) *Messiah was to be a King.*

PROPHECY. — Psal. ii. 6. Yet have I set my *king* upon my holy hill of Zion. — Psal. cxxxii. 11. The Lord hath sworn to David, "Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy *throne*." (See also Isa. ix. 6., lv. 4.; Zech. vi. 13.) — Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. A *king* shall reign and prosper; this is the name whereby he shall be called, "The Lord our righteousness." (See also Isa. xxxii. 1.)—Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25. David my servant shall be *king* over them. (See also xxxiv. 23, 24.; Jer. xxx. 9.; Hos. iii. 5.)— Zech. ix. 9. Shout O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy *king* cometh unto thee. (Cited as fulfilled in Matt. xxi. 5.; John xii. 15.; Luke xix. 38.)

FULFILMENT. — Matt. ii. 5, 6. Thus it is written by the prophet, "Out of thee shall come a *governor*, that shall rule my people Israel." (Mic. v. 2.) — Luke i. 32, 33. The Lord God shall give unto him the *throne* of his father David, and he shall *reign* over the house of Jacob for ever. — John i. 49. Nathaniel answered, "Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the *king* of Israel." — John xviii. 33. 36, 37. Pilate said, "Art thou the *king* of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world: now is my kingdom not from hence." Pilate said, "Art thou a king then?" Jesus answered, "Thou sayest that I am a king." (See also Matt. xxvii. 11. — Acts v. 31. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a *prince* and a Saviour.

(ii.) *Messiah was to be a king, superior to all others, the head and ruler of the church.*

PROPHECY. — Psal. lxxxix. 27. 36. I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. His throne as the sun before me. — Dan. vii. 13, 14. One like the Son of Man; — There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom;

that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion. (See also Dan. vii. 27., ii. 44.)

Fulfilment.—Rev. i. 5. The *Prince of the kings of the earth.*—1 Tim. vi. 15. Who is the blessed and only potentate, the *King of kings and Lord of lords.* (See also Rev. xvii. 14., xix. 16.)—Eph. i. 21. Far *above* all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.—Phil. ii. 9. God hath highly *exalted* him, and given him a name which is *above every name.*—Eph. i. 22, 23. God hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be *Head* over all things *to the Church*, which is his body.—Col. i. 18. Christ is the *Head of the Church*, which is his body. (See also Eph. v. 23.)—Eph. iv. 15, 16. Who is the *Head, even* Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted . . . . maketh increase.—1 Cor. xii. 27. Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

(iii.) *Messiah the king was to be exalted, more particularly after his sufferings and resurrection.*

Prophecy.—Psal. ii. 6, 7. (cited and applied to Christ in Acts xiii. 33. and Heb. v. 5.) I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.—Psal. viii. 5. Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.—Isa. liii. 10. 12. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed; and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.—Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death.

Fulfilment.—1 Pet. i. 11. The prophets . . . testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.—Luke xxiv. 26. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into glory?—John xvii. 1. The hour is come, glorify thy Son.—Rom. i. 4. Declared to be the Son of God with power . . . . by the resurrection from the dead.—1 Pet. i. 21. God . . . raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory.—1 Pet. iii. 22. Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto him.—Acts ii. 32, 33. Jesus hath God raised up . . . therefore being by the right hand of God exalted.—Phil. ii. 8, 9. Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him.—Heb. ii. 9. We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.—Heb. xii. 2. Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

CHAP. II.

THE PRINCIPAL PREDICTIONS BY JESUS CHRIST RELATIVE TO HIS SUFFERINGS, DEATH, RESURRECTION, THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL, AND THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

[*Referred to in page* 299. *of this Volume.*]

SECT. I.

PREDICTIONS (FOR THE CONFIRMATION OF HIS DISCIPLES' FAITH) THAT THEY WOULD FIND THINGS ACCORDING TO HIS WORD.

Prophecy.—Matt. xxi. 1, 2, 3.; Mark xi. 2.; Luke xix. 30, 31. Jesus sent two disciples, saying unto them, "Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied and a colt with her; loose them, and bring them unto me: and if any man shall say aught unto you, ye shall say, 'The Lord hath need of them,' and straightway he will send them."—Mark xiv. 13, 14, 15. Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water, follow him; and wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the good man of the house, "The

master saith, Where is the guest-chamber where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?" And he will show you a large upper room. (See also Matt. xxvi. 18.)

FULFILMENT.—Mark xi. 4, 5, 6.; Luke xix. 32. They found the colt tied by the door without, in a place where two ways met, and they loose him; and certain of them that stood there said to them, "What do ye loosing the colt?" and they said to them even as Jesus had commanded, and they let them go.—Luke xxii. 13.; Mark xiv. 16. They went and found as he had said unto them.

SECT. II.

PREDICTIONS OF JESUS CHRIST RELATIVE TO HIS SUFFERINGS, DEATH, RESURRECTION, AND ASCENSION.

§ 1. *That he was to be betrayed by one of his disciples, and by Judas Iscariot.*

PROPHECY.—John vi. 70, 71. Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for he it was that should betray him.—Matt. xx. 18. Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes. (See also Matt. xvii. 22.; Mark x. 33.; Luke ix. 44.)—Matt. xxvi. 2. Ye know, that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified. —John xiii. 10, 11. Ye are clean, but not all; for he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. (18., xvii. 12.)—Mark xiv. 18. Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. (Matt. xxvi. 21.; John xiii. 21.; Luke xxii. 21.)—John xiii. 26. He it is to whom I shall give a sop:—he gave it to Judas Iscariot. (Mark xiv. 20.)—Mark xiv. 42. He that betrayeth me is at hand. (Matt. xxvi. 46.)

FULFILMENT.—Matt. xxvi. 14, 15, 16. One of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? and they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver; and from that time he sought opportunity to betray him. (Mark xiv. 10.; Luke xxii. 3., John xiii. 2.)—Matt. xxvi. 47—49. Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he, hold him fast; and forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master, and kissed him.

§ 2. *That his other Disciples would forsake him.*

PROPHECY.—Mark xiv. 27.; Matt. xxvi. 31. Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."—John xvi. 32. The hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone. —John xviii. 8, 9. Jesus answered, If ye seek me, let these go their way; that the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

FULFILMENT.—Matt. xxvi. 56. Then ALL *the disciples* FORSOOK *him and fled.*—Mark xiv. 50. *And they* ALL FORSOOK *him and fled.*

§ 3. *That Peter would deny him.*

PROPHECY.—Luke xxii. 31, 32. Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.—John xiii. 38. Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice. (See also Matt. xxvi. 34.; Luke xxii. 34.)—Mark xiv. 30. Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

FULFILMENT.—Luke xxii. 60, 61, 62. Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest; and immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had

said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice; and Peter went out, and wept bitterly. (See also Matt. xxvi. 75.; John xviii. 27.)—Mark xiv. 72. The second time the cock crew, and Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

§ 4. *The circumstances, place, and manner of his sufferings.*

(i.) *That he should suffer.*

Prophecy.—Matt. xvi. 21.; Mark viii. 31.; Luke ix. 22. Jesus began to teach *and* to show unto his disciples, how that he, the Son of Man, must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.—Mark ix. 31.; Matt. xvii. 22, 23. The Son of Man shall be delivered into the hands of men; and they shall kill him: and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.—Mark x. 33, 34.; Matt. xx. 18, 19.; Luke xviii. 31—33. Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written in the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished: and the Son of Man shall be betrayed, *and* delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him unto death, and shall deliver him unto the Gentiles. And they shall mock and spitefully entreat him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him, and crucify *him;* and the third day he shall rise again.

Fulfilment.—John xi. 53. They took counsel together to put him to death.—Matt. xxvi. 4.; Mark xiv. 1.; Luke xxii. 2. And consulted how they might take Jesus by subtilty and put him to death.—Matt. xxvi. 66.; Mark xiv. 64.; Luke xxii. 71. They answered and said, "He is guilty of death" . . . . . and they all condemned him to be guilty of death.—Matt. xxvii. 26.; Luke xxiii. 24.; John xix. 16. When he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.—John xix. 18.; Matt. xxvii. 35.; Luke xxiii. 33. . . . . . Golgotha; where they crucified him, and two others with him.—Luke xxiv. 6, 7. 26. 46. Remember how he spake unto you, when he was yet in Galilee, saying, "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." . . . . . "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" . . . . . Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.—Acts ii. 23. Him . . . . . ye have taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain.—Acts xiii. 27. They have fulfilled (*the prophecies*) in condemning him.—Acts xvii. 3. (*Paul opened and alleged out of the Scriptures*) That Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead.—Gal. iii. 1. . . . . . Christ hath evidently been set forth crucified among you.

(ii.) *The* PLACE *where he should suffer,* viz. *at Jerusalem.*

Prophecy.—Matt. xvi. 21.; Luke ix. 31. He must go unto Jerusalem and suffer.—Luke xiii. 31. 33. Herod will kill thee. It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.—Luke xviii. 31.; Matt. xx. 18. We go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished.

Fulfilment.—Luke xxiv. 18. Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? (See also Matt. xxvii.; Mark xv.; Luke xxiii.; John xix.)—Acts xiii. 27. They that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath-day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.—Heb. xiii. 12. Jesus . . . . . suffered without the gate.

(iii.) *The* PERSONS *by whom he was to suffer,* viz. *particularly by the Chief Priests and Gentiles.*

(*a*) *By the Chief Priests.*

Prophecy.—Matt. xvi. 21.; Mark viii. 31.; Luke ix. 22. He must suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes.—Matt. xvii. 12. Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them.—Mark x. 33. The Son of Man shall be delivered to the chief priests and to the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death.

Fulfilment.—Matt. xxvi. 3, 4.; John xi. 53. Then assembled together the chief priests and the scribes and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest who was called Caiaphas; and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty and kill him.—John xviii. 13. 24.; Matt. xxvi. 57. They led him away to

Annas first. Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.—Matt. xxvi. 65, 66.; Mark xiv. 64. The high priest rent his clothes, saying, "He hath spoken blasphemy,—what think ye?" They answered and said, "He is guilty of death."—Matt. xxvii. 20.; Luke xxiii. 18. The chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should *ask* Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.—Luke xxiv. 20.; Acts xiii. 28. The chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death.

(*b.*) *By the Gentiles.*

Prophecy.—Luke xviii. 31, 32.; Mark x. 33.; Matt. xx. 19. The Son of Man shall be delivered to the Gentiles. (Note, that when Jesus foretold that he should be crucified, it also implied that he should be delivered to the Gentiles; for crucifixion was a Roman not a Jewish punishment.)

Fulfilment.—Acts xiii. 28. Though they found no cause of death *in him*, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.—Matt. xxvii. 2.; Mark xv. 1. They delivered him unto Pontius Pilate the governor.—John xviii. 31, 32. Pilate said unto them, "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law." The Jews therefore said unto him, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death;" that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled.—Mark xv. 15.; Luke xxiii. 24. Pilate delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.—Acts iv. 27. Against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together.

(iv.) *The* manner *of his sufferings,* viz. *by mocking and crucifixion.*

(*a.*) *Jesus foretold that he should be mocked.*

Prophecy.—Mark ix. 12. The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be set at nought.—Luke xviii. 32.; Mark x. 34. The Son of Man shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked and spitefully entreated, and spitted on.

Fulfilment.—*At the high priest's.*—Matt. xxvi. 67, 68.; Mark xiv. 65. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, "Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee."—*Before Herod.*—Luke xxiii. 11. Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe.—*At Pilate's judgment hall.*—Mark xv. 17—19.; Matt. xxvii. 28.; John xix. 2. They clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns and put it about his head, and began to salute him, "Hail, king of the Jews!" and they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him.—*At the Cross.*—Mark xv. 29—32. They that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads and saying, "Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross." Likewise also, the chief priests, mocking, said, among themselves, with the scribes, "He saved others, himself he cannot save; let Christ the king of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

(*b.*) *Jesus foretold that he should be crucified.*

Prophecy.—John iii. 14. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.—John xii. 32. And I, if I be (*more correctly*, when I am) lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.—John viii. 28. When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he.—Matt. xx. 19. . . . To mock and to scourge and to crucify him.

Fulfilment.—Matt. xxvii. 31.; John xix. 16. They led him away to crucify him.—Luke xxiii. 33.; Mark xv. 20. 25. When they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him.—Luke xxiv. 6, 7. Remember how he spake to you. . . . The Son of Man must . . . be crucified. Compare also Luke xxiv. 20.; Acts ii. 23., and iv. 10.; 1 Cor. i. 23.; Gal. iii. 1.

§ 5. *Jesus Christ predicted his resurrection.*

Prophecy.—John ii. 19. 21. Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." He spake of the temple of his body.—John x. 17. I lay down my life that I may take it again.—Mark x. 34. (See also Mark viii. 31.; Luke ix. 22.) They shall kill him, and the third day he shall rise again. — Matt. xxvii. 62, 63. The chief priests and Pharisees came together to Pilate, saying, Sir, we re-

member that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, "After three days I will rise again."

FULFILMENT. — Luke xxiv. 5, 6. Why seek ye the living among the dead? he is not here but is risen; remember how he spake to you when he was yet in Galilee. See also Matt. xxviii. 6., and xxviii. 9. 11.; Luke xxiv. 15. 34. 36; John xx. 14. 19., and xxi. 4. — John xx. 27. Then saith he to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing." — Acts i. 3. To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days. — Acts x. 40, 41. Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. See also Acts ii. 32., and iv. 33.; 1 Cor. xv. 20.; Acts xvii. 3., xxvi. 23.; Rom. i. 4.

§ 6. *Jesus Christ foretold that he would appear again to his disciples.*

PROPHECY. — John xvi. 16. 22. A little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. I will see you again. — Matt. xxvi. 32.; Mark xiv. 28. After I am risen again I will go before you into Galilee. — Matt. xxviii. 10.; Mark xvi. 7. Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

FULFILMENT. — Mark xvi. 14.; John xx. 19.; Luke xxiv. 36. He appeared to the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief. — Matt. xxviii. 16, 17. The eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him they worshipped him, but some doubted. — John xxi. 1. Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias. — 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6. He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.

§ 7. *Jesus Christ foretold his ascension into heaven.*

PROPHECY. — John vi. 62. What if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before. — xvi. 28. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and go to the Father. — xx. 17. I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren and say unto them, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." (See also John vii. 33., xiii. 33., xiv. 19., and xvii. 13.)

FULFILMENT. — Mark xvi. 19. After the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. (See also Luke xxiv. 51.) — Acts i. 9, 10. While they beheld he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. They looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up. — Eph. iv. 10. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens. See also 1 Pet. iii. 22.; Heb. ix. 24., iv. 14., vi. 20.; 1 Tim. iii. 16.

SECT. III.

PROPHECIES BY JESUS CHRIST RELATIVE TO THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

[*Referred to in page* 299. *of this Volume.*]

§ 1. *The signs, which were to precede the destruction of Jerusalem.*

(i.) *The* FIRST SIGN *is, The appearance of false Christs or Messiahs.*

PROPHECY. — Matt. xxiv. 4, 5.; Mark xiii. 5, 6.; Luke xxi. 8. *Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, "I am Christ," and shall deceive many; and the time draweth near.*

FULFILMENT. — These false Christs began to appear soon after our Lord's death, but they multiplied as the national calamities increased. Josephus informs us that that there were many who, pretending to divine inspiration, deceived the people, leading out numbers of them into the desert. He does not indeed expressly say that they called themselves the *Messiah* or Christ; yet he says that which is equivalent, viz. that they pretended that God would there show them the signs of liberty, meaning redemption from the Roman yoke, which thing the Jews expected the

Messiah would do for them. (Compare Luke xxiv. 21.) Josephus further adds, that an Egyptian false prophet led thirty thousand men into the desert, who were almost entirely cut off by Felix the Roman procurator.[1] The same historian relates that in the reign of Claudius, "the land was overrun with magicians, seducers, and impostors, who drew the people after them in multitudes into solitudes and deserts to see the signs and miracles which they promised to show by the power of God."[2] Felix, and afterwards Festus, governors of Judæa, judging these proceedings to be the commencement of rebellion against the Romans, continually sent out detachments of soldiers, and destroyed great numbers of the deluded populace. Among these impostors were Dositheus the Samaritan, who affirmed that he was the Christ foretold by Moses; Simon Magus, who said that he appeared among the Jews as the Son of God; and Theudas who, pretending to be a prophet, persuaded many of the people to take their goods and follow him to the river Jordan, declaring that he was divinely commissioned, and that at his command the waters would be divided, and give them a safe passage to the opposite side.[3] Many other examples of pretended Messiahs might be adduced; but the preceding are sufficient to establish the truth of our Lord's prediction.[4]

ii.) *The* SECOND SIGN *is, Wars and Commotions.*

PROPHECY.—Matt. xxiv. 6.; Mark xiii. 7.; Luke xxi. 9. *When ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, and commotions, see that ye be not troubled,* and *terrified; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.*

FULFILMENT.—These wars and commotions were as the distant thunder, that forebodes approaching storms. Previously to the destruction of Jerusalem, the greatest agitation prevailed in the Roman empire, and the struggle for succession to the imperial throne was attended by severe and bloody conflicts. Four emperors, Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, suffered violent deaths within the short space of eighteen months. The emperor Caligula commanded the Jews to place his statue in their temple; and in consequence of a positive refusal to comply with so impious a request, he threatened them with an invasion, which was prevented by his death.[5] Jesus Christ added, *see that ye* (my disciples) *be not troubled,* as the Jews will be, expecting the approaching destruction of their nation; *but the end is not yet:* these events, alarming as they seemed, were only the preludes to the dreadful and tumultuous scenes that followed.

PROPHECY.—Matt. xxiv. 7.; Mark xiii. 8.; Luke xxi. 10. *Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.*

FULFILMENT.—In this prediction, Christ declares that greater disturbances than those which happened under Caligula would take place in the latter part of Claudius's reign and during that of Nero. The rising of *nation against nation* portended the dissensions, insurrections, and mutual slaughter of the Jews and those of other nations, who dwelt in the same cities together; as particularly at Cæsarea[6], where the Jews and Syrians contended about the right of the city, which contention at length proceeded so far that above twenty thousand Jews were slain, and the city was cleared of the Jewish inhabitants. At this blow the whole[7] nation of the Jews were exasperated, and dividing themselves into parties, they burnt and plundered the neighbouring cities and villages of the Syrians, and made an immense slaughter of the people. The Syrians in revenge destroyed not a less number of the Jews, and every city, as Josephus[8] expresses it, was divided into two armies. At Scythopolis[9] the inhabitants compelled the Jews who resided among them to fight against their own countrymen; and after the victory, basely setting upon them by night, they murdered above thirteen thousand of them, and spoiled their

[1] Josephus, de Bell. Jud. lib. 2. c. 13. § 4, 5.
[2] Josephus, Ant. Jud. lib. 20. c. 68. § 6. [3] Ibid. c. 4. (al. 5.) § 1.
[4] In the Rev. David Simpson's Key to the Prophecies there is an instructive History of *twenty-four* false Messiahs, who deluded the Jews between the time of the emperor Adrian and the year of Christ 1682. See pp. 133—148.
[5] Joseph. Antiq. lib. 18. c. 8. (al. 9.) De Bell. Jud. lib. 2. c. 10.
[6] Ibid. lib. 20. c. 7. § 7, &c. De Bell. Jud. lib. 2. c. 13. § 7. c. 18. § 1. edit. Hudson.
[7] Ibid. c. 18. § 1. [8] Ibid. § 2. [9] Ibid. § 3. Vita Joseph. § 6.

goods. At Ascalon[1] they killed two thousand five hundred, at Ptolemais two thousand, and made not a few prisoners. The Tyrians put many to death and imprisoned more. The people of Gadara did likewise, and all the other cities of Syria, in proportion as they hated or feared the Jews. At Alexandria[2] the old enmity was revived between the Jews and Heathens, and many fell on both sides, but of the Jews to the number of fifty thousand. The people of Damascus[3], too, conspired against the Jews of the same city, and assaulting them unarmed, killed ten thousand of them. The rising of *kingdom against kingdom* portended the open wars of different tetrarchies and provinces against one another; as that[4] of the Jews who dwelt in Peræa against the people of Philadelphia concerning their bounds, while Cuspius Fadus was procurator; and that[5] of the Jews and Galilæans against the Samaritans, for the murder of some Galilæans going up to the feast of Jerusalem, while Cumanus was procurator; and that[6] of the whole nation of the Jews against the Romans and Agrippa and other allies of the Roman empire, which began while Gessius Florus was procurator. But, as Josephus says[7], there was not only sedition and civil war throughout Judæa, but likewise in Italy, Otho and Vitellius contending for the empire.

(iii.) *The* THIRD SIGN *is, Famines and Pestilences.*

PROPHECY.—Matt. xxiv. 7.; Mark xiii. 8.; Luke xxi. 11. *And there shall be famines and pestilences.*

FULFILMENT.—There was a famine predicted by Agabus (Acts xi. 28.) which is mentioned by Suetonius, Tacitus, and Eusebius[8], and *which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar;* and was so severe at Jerusalem that (Josephus informs us) many persons perished for want of food.[9] *Pestilences* are the usual attendants of famines, as scarcity and badness of provisions almost always terminate in some epidemical distemper. That Judæa was afflicted with pestilence we learn from Josephus; who says, that when one Niger was put to death by the Jewish zealots, besides other calamities, he imprecated famine and *pestilence* upon them, "all which imprecations God confirmed against these impious men."[10]

(iv.) *The* FOURTH SIGN *is Earthquakes.*

PROPHECY.—Matt. xxiv. 7.; Mark xiii. 8.; Luke xxi. 11. *There shall be earthquakes.*

FULFILMENT.—*Earthquakes* in prophetic language mean commotions and popular insurrections: if these be intended, they have already been noticed under the second sign; but if we understand this prophecy *literally*, of tremors or convulsions of the earth, many such occurred at the times to which our Lord referred; particularly one at Crete, in the reign of Claudius, and others at Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, and other places, in all of which Jews were settled.[11] Tacitus mentions one at Rome in the same reign, and says, that in the reign of Nero, the cities of Laodicæa, Hierapolis, and Colosse were overthrown; and that the celebrated city of Pompeii in Campania was overthrown[12], and almost demolished, by an earthquake.[13] And another earthquake at Rome is mentioned by Suetonius as having happened in the reign of Galba.[14]

(v.) *The* FIFTH SIGN *is, Fearful Sights and Signs from Heaven.*

PROPHECY.—Luke xxi. 11. *There shall be fearful sights and signs from heaven.*

FULFILMENT.—Many prodigies are related by Josephus; particularly that in Judæa, at the commencement of the war, and before the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, "there broke out a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence and very strong winds, with the largest showers of rain, with continual lightnings, terrible thunderings, and amazing concussions and bellowings of the earth that was

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[1] De Bell. Jud. lib. 2. c. 18. § 5. [2] Ibid. § 7. et 8. [3] Ibid. chap. 20. § 2.
[4] Joseph. Antiq. lib. 20. c. 1. § 1. [5] Ibid. c. 5. De Bell. Jud. lib. 2. c. 12. § 3, &c.
[6] Ibid. c. 17. [7] Ibid. lib. 4. c. 9. § 9.
[8] Suetonius, in Claudio, c. 18. Taciti Annales, lib. 12. c. 43. Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. 2. c. 8.
[9] Antiq. lib. 20. c. 2. § 5. (al. 6.) [10] De Bell. Jud. lib. 4. c. 6. § 1.
[11] Philostratus, in Vita Apollonii, lib. 4. c. 34. [12] Taciti Annales, lib. 14. c. 27.
[13] Ibid. lib. 15. c. 22. This earthquake is mentioned by Seneca Nat. Quæst. lib. 6. c. 1.
[14] Suetonius, in Galba, c. 18.

in an earthquake. These things were a manifest indication, that some destruction was coming upon men, when the system of this world was thrown into such a disorder; and any one would guess that these wonders portended some grand calamities that were impending."[1] The same historian, in the preface[2] to his history of the Jewish war, undertakes to record the signs and prodigies that preceded it; and accordingly in his sixth book[3] he enumerates them thus: — 1. A star hung over the city like a sword, and the comet continued for a whole year. — 2. The people being assembled to celebrate the feast of unleavened bread, at the ninth hour of the night there shone so great a light about the altar and the temple, that it seemed to be bright day, and this continued for half an hour. — 3. At the same feast, a cow, led by the priest to sacrifice, brought forth a lamb in the middle of the temple. — 4. The eastern gate of the temple, which was of solid brass, and very heavy, and was scarcely shut in an evening by twenty men, and was fastened by strong bars and bolts, was seen at the sixth hour of the night opened of its own accord, and could hardly be shut again. — 5. Before the setting of the sun there were seen over all the country, chariots and armies fighting in the clouds, and besieging cities — 6. At the feast of Pentecost, as the priests were going into the inner temple by night as usual to attend their service, they heard first a motion and noise, and then a voice as of a multitude, saying, *Let us depart hence.* — 7. What Josephus reckons as the most terrible of all, one Jesus, an ordinary country fellow, four years before the war began, and when the city was in peace and plenty, came to the feast of tabernacles, and ran crying up and down the streets day and night, "*A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the temple, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, a voice against all the people.*" The magistrates endeavoured by stripes and torture to restrain him; but he still cried with a mournful voice, "*Woe, woe to Jerusalem!*" This he continued to do for seven years and five months together, and especially at the great festivals; and he neither grew hoarse, nor was tired; but went about the walls and cried with a loud voice, "*Woe, woe to the city, and to the people, and to the temple;*" and as he added at last, "*Woe, woe also to myself,*" it happened that a stone from some sling or engine immediately struck him dead. These were indeed *fearful signs and great sights from heaven;* and there is not a more credible historian than the author who relates them, and who appeals to the testimony of those who saw and heard them.[4] But it may add some weight to his relation, that Tacitus, the Roman historian, also gives us a summary account of the same occurrences. He says[5], that there happened several prodigies, armies were seen engaging in the heavens, arms were seen glittering, and the temple shone with the sudden fire of the clouds, the doors of the temple opened suddenly, and a voice greater than human was heard, that the gods were departing, and likewise a great motion of their departing. Dr. Jortin's remark is very pertinent: — If Christ had not expressly foretold this, many who give little heed to portents, and who knew that historians have been too credulous in that point, would have suspected that Josephus exaggerated, and that Tacitus was misinformed; but as the testimonies of Josephus and Tacitus confirm the predictions of Christ, so the predictions of Christ confirm the wonders recorded by these historians.[6]

(vi.) *The* SIXTH SIGN *is, The Persecution of the Christians.*

PROPHECY. — Mark xiii. 9.; Matt. xxiv. 9.; Luke xxi. 12. *But before all these things, they shall lay hands on you, and persecute* you, and *shall deliver you up to councils, to the synagogues and to prisons, to be beaten; and sholl kill you. And ye shall be hated of all nations,* and *shall be brought before rulers and kings for my name's sake, for a testimony against them.*

FULFILMENT. — The precision with which the time is specified, is very remark-

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[1] De Bell. Jud. lib. 4. c. 4. § 5. [2] Ibid. § 11. [3] Ibid. lib. 6. c. 5. § 3.

[4] Mr. Milman has admirably wrought up these portentous signs in his Poem on the Fall of Jerusalem, pp. 106—114.

[5] Evenerant prodigia — Visæ per cœlum concurrere acies, rutilantia arma, et subito nubium igne collucere templum. Expassæ repente delubri fores, et audita major humana vox, *Excedere Deos.* Simul ingens motus excedentium. Tacit. Hist. lib. 5. c. 13. p. 217. edit. Lipsii.

[6] Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. i. p. 41.

able. Previously to the other prognostics of the destruction of Jerusalem, the disciples of Jesus Christ were taught to expect the hardships of persecution; and how exactly this prediction was accomplished we may read in the Acts of the Apostles. There we find that some were *delivered to councils*, as Peter and John. (iv. 5, &c.) Some were *brought before rulers and kings*, as Paul before Gallio (xviii. 12.), Felix (xxiv.), Festus, and Agrippa (xxv.). Some had *a mouth and wisdom which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay nor resist*, as it is said of Stephen (vi. 10.), that *they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake*, and Paul made even Felix to *tremble* (xxiv. 25.), and the Gospel still prevailed against all opposition and persecution whatever. Some were *imprisoned*, as Peter and John (iv. 3.) Some were *beaten*, as Paul and Silas (xvi. 23). Some were *put to death*, as Stephen (vii. 59.), and James the brother of John (xii. 2.) But if we would look farther, we have a more melancholy proof of the truth of this prediction, in the persecutions under Nero, in which (besides numberless other Christians) fell those[1] two great champions of our faith, St. Peter and St. Paul. And it was *nominis prælium*, as Tertullian[2] terms it; it was a war against the very name. Though a man was possessed of every human virtue, yet it was crime enough if he was a *Christian:* so true were our Saviour's words, that they should be hated of all nations *for his name's sake*. Hence arose that common saying among the heathens — *Vir bonus Caius Sejus; tanquam modo quòd Christianus:* — Caius Sejus is a good man, *only* he is a Christian.

(vii.) *The* SEVENTH SIGN *was, The Preaching of the Gospel throughout the then known world.*

PROPHECY. — Mark xiii. 10. *The Gospel must be published among all nations*. The FULFILMENT of this prediction is recorded, from Christian and from Heathen testimony, *suprà*, pp. 301—304.

§ 2. *The Circumstances of the Destruction of Jerusalem.*

(i.) *The Siege of Jerusalem by the Roman Armies.*

PROPHECY.— Luke xxi. 20.; Matt. xxiv. 15.; Mark xiii. 14. *When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies*, [and] *the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, in the holy place,— then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.* — Luke xix. 43. *The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench round about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side.*

FULFILMENT. — The devoted place, which was the immediate object of these formidable denunciations, is here most clearly pointed out. The *abomination of desolation* is the Roman army; and *the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place* is the Roman army encamped around Jerusalem; for not only the temple and the mountain on which it stood, but also the whole city of Jerusalem and several furlongs of land round it, were accounted holy. This Jesus Christ declared to be *the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet* in his ninth and eleventh chapters; and *so* let every one who reads these prophecies understand them, and in reference to this very event they are understood by the rabbins. The Roman army is further called the *abomination*, on account of its ensigns, for the images of the emperor and the eagles which were carried in front of the legions, were regarded with religious abhorrence by the Jews, as they were ranked among the pagan deities, and reverenced with divine honours. Josephus relates, that after the city was taken, the Romans brought their ensigns into the temple, placed them over the eastern gate, and sacrificed to them there.[3]

A *trench was* literally *cast about* Jerusalem, when that city was besieged by Titus. The Roman armies *compassed it round about* completely; and although it was at first considered an impracticable project to surround the whole city with a wall, yet Titus animated his army to make the attempt. Josephus has given a very particular account of the building of this wall; which, he says, was effected in *three days*, though it was not less than *thirty-nine furlongs* (nearly *nine* English miles) in length, and

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[1] Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 2. c. 25.
[2] Tertul. Apol. c. 2. p. 4. edit. Rigaltii. Paris, 1675.
[3] De Bell. Jud. lib. 6. c. 6. § 1.

had thirteen towers erected at proper distances, in which the Roman soldiers were placed, as in garrisons. When the wall was thus completed, the Jews were *so inclosed on every side*, that no person could escape out of the city, and no provision could be brought in; so that the besieged Jews were involved in the most terrible distress by the famine that ensued.[1]

(ii.) *Christ's prophetic advice to the Christians who might then be in Jerusalem, to make their escape.*

PROPHECY. — Matt. xxiv. 16—18.; Mark xiii. 14—16.; Luke xxi. 21. *Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains, and let them which are in the midst of it depart out, and let them that are in the* [adjacent] *countries enter thereinto. And let not him that is on the house-top go down into the house, neither enter therein to take any thing out of his house. And let him that is in the field not turn back again to take up his garment* (which he had thrown aside as an incumbrance).

FULFILMENT. — This counsel was wisely remembered and wisely followed by the Christians afterwards. By *Judæa*, in this part of our Lord's prophecy, we are to understand all the southern parts of Palestine, both the plain and the hill countries, which at that time had received the appellation of Judæa. By the *mountains* we are to understand the countries on the eastern side of the river Jordan, especially those which during the Jewish war were under the government of the younger Agrippa, to whom the emperor Claudius gave Batanæa and Trachonitis (the tetrarchy of Philip), and Abilene (the tetrarchy of Lysanius). Nero afterwards added that quarter of Galilee where Tiberias and Tarichea stood, and in Peræa, Julias with its fourteen villages. As all these mountainous countries remained in obedience to the Romans, those who fled into them were safe. In the twelfth year of Nero, Josephus informs us that Cestius Gallus, the president of Syria, came with a powerful army against Jerusalem; which he might have assaulted and taken: but without any just reason, and contrary to the expectation of all, he raised the siege and departed. Immediately after his retreat, "many of the principal Jewish people forsook the city, as men do a sinking ship."[2] And a few years afterwards, when Vespasian was drawing his forces towards Jerusalem, a great multitude fled from Jericho into the *mountainous country* for their security.[3] Among these it is probable that there were some Christians; but we learn more certainly from ecclesiastical historians[4], that, at this juncture, all who believed in Jesus Christ, warned by this *oracle* or prophecy, quitted Jerusalem, and removed to Pella, and other places beyond the river Jordan; and thus marvellously escaped the general shipwreck of their country; for we do not read any where that so much as one Christian perished in the siege of Jerusalem.

(iii.) *The appearance of false Christs and false prophets during the siege.*

PROPHECY. — Mark xiii. 22.; Matt. xxiv. 24. *False Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that if* it were *possible, they should deceive the very elect* (that is), the disciples of Jesus Christ.

FULFILMENT. — Our Saviour had before cautioned his disciples against false Christs. (See pp. 566, 567. *suprà.*) This prediction is not a repetition of the former prophecy, but relates to those impostors who appeared during the time of the siege, and concerning whom Josephus[5] thus speaks: — "The tyrannical zealots, who ruled the city, suborned many false prophets to declare, that aid would be given to the people from heaven. This was done to prevent them from attempting to desert, and to inspire them with confidence. In this manner impostors, abusing the sacred name of God, deluded the unhappy multitude; who, like infatuated men that have neither eyes to see, nor reason to judge, regarded neither the infallible denunciations pronounced by the ancient prophets, nor the clear prodigies that indicated the approaching desolation."

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[1] De Bell. Jud. lib 5. c. 12. §§ 1—3.
[2] Ibid. lib. 2. c. 19. § 6. c. 20. § 1. [3] Ibid. lib. 4. c. 8. § 2.
[4] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. 3. c. 6. Epiphanius adversus Nazaræos, lib. 1. § 7.
[5] Josephus, de Bell. Jud. lib. 6. c. 5.

(iv.) *The Miseries of the Jews during, and subsequently to, the Siege.*

Prophecy. — Luke xxi. 22. *For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.* — Mark xiii. 17. 19.; Matt. xxiv. 19. 21.; Luke xxi. 23, 24. *But woe to them that are with child, and that give suck in those days, for in those days there shall be great tribulation, distress in the land, and wrath upon this people; such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time; no, nor ever shall be. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations.*

Fulfilment. — It is a very material circumstance in this prophecy, that the calamity of the Jews should be so strange and unparalleled, as never was in the world before; for though it might easily have been foretold from the temper of the people, which was prone to sedition, that they were very likely to provoke the Romans against them; yet there was no probability that all things should have come to such an extremity; for it was not the design of the Roman government to destroy any of those provinces which were under them, but only to keep them in subjection, and reduce them by reasonable severity in case of revolt. But that such a calamity should have happened to them under Titus, who was the mildest, and farthest from severity of all mankind, nothing was more unlikely; and that any people should conspire together to their own ruin, and so blindly and obstinately run themselves into such calamities, as made them the pity of their enemies, was the most incredible thing; so that nothing less than a prophetical spirit could have foretold so contingent and improbable a thing as this was. To the extreme sufferings of the Jews, Josephus bears most ample testimony. In the preface to his history of the Jewish War, speaking generally of the calamities that befell the Jews, he says, almost in our Saviour's words, that "*all the calamities, which had befallen any nation* FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD, *were but small in comparison of those of the Jews.*"[1] A brief enumeration of particulars, will, however, show the extremities to which this unhappy nation was reduced.

Within the city, the fury of the opposite factions was so great that they filled all places, even the temple itself, with continual slaughters. Nay, to such a height did their madness rise, that they destroyed the very granaries of corn, which should have sustained them; and burnt the magazines of arms which should have defended them.[2] By this means, when the siege had lasted only two months, the famine began to rage, and at length reduced them to such straits, that the barbarities which they practised are not to be imagined. All the reverence due to age, and the sacred ties of parent and child were annihilated. Children snatched the half baked morsels which their fathers were eating, out of their mouths; and mothers even snatched the food out of their own children's mouths.[3] As the siege advanced, the ravages of the famine increased, and devoured the people by whole houses and families; the upper rooms were filled with women and children who were dying by famine, and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged.[4] The children also, and the young men, wandered about the market places like shadows, and fell down dead wheresoever their misery seized them. At length the famine became so extreme, that they gladly devoured what the most sordid animals refused to touch; and a woman of distinguished rank (who had been stripped and plundered of all her goods and provisions by the soldiers), in hunger, rage, and despair, killed and roasted her babe at the breast, and had eaten one half of him before the horrid deed was discovered.[5]

During the siege, many hundreds, who were taken by the Romans, were first whipped, then tormented with various kinds of tortures, and finally crucified; the Roman soldiers nailing them (out of the wrath and hatred they bore to the Jews)

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[1] Josephus, de Bell. Jud. lib. 1. Præf. § 4.
[2] Ibid. lib. 5. c. 1. § 4.
[3] Ibid. lib. 5. c. 10. §§ 2, 3.
[4] Ibid. lib. 5. c. 12. § 3.
[5] Ibid. lib. 6. c. 3. §§ 3, 4. The historian deplores the cruel deed as a most flagrant violation of nature, which had never been perpetrated by Greek or barbarian; and such as he would not have related, if there had not been innumerable witnesses to it in his own age. It may be proper to remark that this horrid circumstance was a further accomplishment of the prophecy of Moses in Deut. xxviii. 53. 56, 57.; and which had twice before been fulfilled, — first in Samaria, the capital of the idolatrous ten tribes, when besieged by Benhadad king of Syria (2 Kings vi. 29.), — and again in Jerusalem, when besieged by Nebuchadnezzar. See the Lamentations of Jeremiah, ii. 20., iv. 10.

one after one way, and another after another, to crosses by way of jest: until at length the multitude became so great that room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses for the bodies.[1] Thus terribly was their imprecation fulfilled: — *His blood be on us, and on our children!* (Matt. xxvii. 25.)

Not to enter into details of the multitudes that were massacred by the contending factions in Jerusalem, the full accomplishment of Christ's prediction, that the Jews should *fall by the edge of the sword*, is recorded by Josephus[2] when describing the sacking of that city.

"And now rushing into every lane, they slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burnt the houses and all the people who had fled into them. And when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine; then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they did not feel the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, insomuch, that many things which were burning, were extinguished by the blood." Thus were the inhabitants of Jerusalem slain with the sword; thus was she laid even with the ground, and her children with her. "The soldiers being now wearied with killing the Jews, and yet a great number remaining alive, Cæsar commanded that only the armed, and they who resisted, should be slain. But the soldiers killed also the old and the infirm; and taking the young and strong prisoners, carried them into the women's court in the temple. Cæsar appointed one Fronto, his freedman and friend, to guard them, and to determine the fate of each. All the robbers and the seditious he slew, one of them betraying another. But picking out such youths as were remarkable for stature and beauty, he reserved them for the triumph. All the rest that were above seventeen years old, he sent bound into Egypt, to be employed in labour there. Titus also sent many of them into the provinces, to be slain in the theatres, by beasts and the sword. And those who were under seventeen years of age were slain. And during the time Fronto judged them, a thousand died of hunger."

But *the falling by the edge of the sword* mentioned in our Lord's prophecy, is not to be confined to what happened at the siege, in which not fewer than eleven hundred thousand perished.[3] It also comprehended all the slaughters made of the Jews in different battles, sieges, and massacres, both in their own country and at other places, during the whole course of the war. Thus, by the command of Florus, who was the first author of the war, there were slain at *Jerusalem*[4], *three thousand and six hundred*: — By the inhabitants of *Cæsarea*[5], *above twenty thousand*: — At *Scythopolis*[6], *above thirteen thousand*: — At *Ascalon*[7], *two thousand five hundred*, and at *Ptolemais*, *two thousand*: — At *Alexandria*, under Tiberius Alexander the president[8], *fifty thousand*: — At *Joppa*, when it was taken by Cestius Gallus[9], *eight thousand four hundred*: — In a mountain called *Asamon* near *Sepphoris*[10], *above two thousand*: — At *Damascus*[11], *ten thousand*: — In a battle with the Romans at *Ascalon*[12], *ten thousand*: — In an ambuscade near the same place[13], *eight thousand*: — At *Japha*[14], *fifteen thousand*: — By the Samaritans upon Mount *Garizin*[15], *eleven thousand and six hundred*: — At *Jotapa*[16], *forty thousand*: — At *Joppa*, when taken by Vespasian[17], *four thousand two hundred*: — At *Tarichea*[18], *six thousand five hundred*, and after the city was taken, *twelve hundred*: — At *Gamala*[19], *four thousand* were slain, besides *five thousand* who threw themselves down a precipice: — Of those who fled with John from *Gischala*[20], *six thousand*: — Of the *Gadarenes*[21], *fifteen thousand* slain, besides an infinite number drowned: — In the villages of *Idumæa*[22], above *ten thousand slain*: — At *Gerasa*[23], *a thousand*: — At *Machærus*[24], *seventeen hundred*: — In the wood of *Jardes*[25], *three thousand*: — In the castle of *Masada*[26], *nine*

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[1] Josephus, de Bell. Jud. lib. 5. c. 11. § 1.
[2] Ibid. lib. 6. c. 8. § 5. c. 9. §§ 2, 3.
[3] Ibid. lib. 6. c. 9. § 3.
[4] Ibid. lib. 2. c. 14. § 9.
[5] Ibid. lib. 2. c. 18. § 1.
[6] Ibid. § 3.
[7] Ibid. § 5.
[8] Ibid. § 8.
[9] Ibid. § 10.
[10] Ibid. § 11.
[11] Ibid. c. 20. § 2.
[12] Lib. 3. c. 2. § 2.
[13] Ibid. § 3.
[14] Ibid. c. 7. § 31.
[15] Ibid. lib. 3. c. 7. § 32.
[16] Ibid. § 36.
[17] Ibid. c. 8. § 3.
[18] Ibid. c. 9. §§ 9, 10.
[19] Lib. 4. c. 1. § 10.
[20] Ibid. c. 3. § 5.
[21] Ibid. c. 7. § 5.
[22] Ibid. c. 8. § 1.
[23] Ibid. c. 9. § 1.
[24] Lib. 7. c. 6. § 4.
[25] Ibid. § 5.
[26] Ibid. c. 9. § 1.

hundred and sixty:—In *Cyrene*, by Catullus the governor[1], *three thousand*:—Besides these, many of every age, sex, and condition, were slain in this war who are not reckoned; but of those who are reckoned the number amounts to above *one million three hundred and fifty-seven thousand six hundred and sixty*: which would appear almost incredible, if their own historian had not so particularly enumerated them.

But besides the Jews who *fell by the edge of the sword*, others were also to *be led away captive into all nations*; and considering the numbers of the slain, the number of the captives too was very great. There were taken particularly at *Japha*[2], *two thousand one hundred and thirty*:—At *Jotapa*[3], *one thousand two hundred*:—At *Tarichea*[4], *six thousand* chosen young men were sent to Nero, the rest were sold, to the number of *thirty thousand and four hundred*, besides those who were given to Agrippa:—Of the *Gadarenes*[5], *two thousand two hundred*:—In *Idumæa*[6], above *a thousand*. Many besides these were taken at *Jerusalem*, so that, as Josephus informs us[7], the number of the captives taken in the whole war amounted to *ninety-seven thousand*; the tall and handsome young men Titus reserved for his triumph; of the rest, those above seventeen years of age were sent to the works in Egypt, but most were distributed through the Roman provinces, to be destroyed in their theatres by the sword or by the wild beasts; those under seventeen were sold for slaves. Of these captives many underwent a hard fate. *Eleven thousand* of them[8] perished for want. Titus exhibited all sorts of shows and spectacles at Cæsarea, and[9] many of the captives were there destroyed, some being exposed to the wild beasts, and others compelled to fight in troops against one another. At *Cæsarea*, too, in honour of his brother's birth-day[10], *two thousand five hundred* Jews were slain; and a great number likewise at *Berytus* in honour of his father's. The like[11] was done in other cities of Syria. Those whom he reserved for his triumph[12] were Simon and John, the generals of the captives, and *seven hundred* others of remarkable stature and beauty. Thus were the Jews miserably tormented, and distributed over the Roman provinces; and are they not still distressed and dispersed over all the nations of the earth?

Was not this *a time of great tribulation*? Were not these *days of vengeance* indeed? Was there ever a more exact accomplishment of any prediction than these words of our Saviour had?

(v.) *The total destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem.*

Prophecy.—Matt. xxiii. 37, 38.; Luke xiii. 34, 35. *O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Behold your house is left unto you desolate.*—Matt. xxiv. 2.; Mark xiii. 2.; Luke xxi. 6. *The days will come, in the which there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*—Luke xix. 44. *They shall lay thee even with the ground, and shall not leave in thee one stone upon another.*—Luke xxi. 24. *Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*

Fulfilment.—It seemed exceedingly improbable that the events here foretold by Jesus Christ should happen in that age, when the Jews were at perfect peace with the Romans; and the strength of their citadel was such as constrained Titus to acknowledge that it was the singular hand of God that compelled them to relinquish fortifications which no human power could have conquered.[13] Our Saviour's words also were almost literally fulfilled, and scarcely *one stone was left upon another*. The temple was a building of such strength and grandeur, of such splendour and beauty, that it was likely (as it was worthy) to be preserved for a monument of the victory and glory of the Roman empire. Titus was accordingly very desirous of preserving it, and protested[14] to the Jews, who had fortified themselves within it, that he would preserve it, even against their will. He had[15] expressed the like desire of preserving the city too, and repeatedly sent Josephus and other Jews to their countrymen, to persuade them to a surrender. But an overruling

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1 Josephus, de Bell. Jud. lib. 7. c. 11. § 2. 2 Lib. 3. c. 7. § 31. 3 Ibid. § 36
4 Ibid. c. 9. § 10. 5 Lib. 4. c. 7. § 5. 6 Ibid. c. 8. § 1.
7 Ibid. lib. 6. c. 19. §§ 2 3. 8 Ibid. lib. 6. c. 9. § 2. 9 Ibid. lib. 7. c. 2. § 1.
10 Ibid. c. 3. § 1. 11 Ibid. c. 5. § 1. 12 Ibid. § 3.
13 Ibid. lib. 6. c. 9. § 1. 14 Ibid. lib. 6. c. 2. § 4.
15 Ibid. lib. 5. c. 8. § 1., c. 9. §§ 2, &c., c. 11. § 2.; lib. 6. c. 2 § 1.

Providence directed things otherwise. The Jews themselves[1] first set fire to the porticoes of the temple, and then the Romans. One of the soldiers[2] neither waiting for any command, nor trembling for such an attempt, but urged by a certain divine impulse, threw a burning brand in at the golden window, and thereby set fire to the buildings of the temple itself. Titus[3] ran immediately to the temple, and commanded his soldiers to extinguish the flame. But neither exhortations nor threatenings could restrain their violence. They either could not hear, or would not hear; and those behind encouraged those before to set fire to the temple. He was still for preserving the holy place. He commanded his soldiers even to be beaten for disobeying him; but their anger and their hatred of the Jews, and a certain warlike vehement fury overcame their reverence for their general and their dread for his commands. A soldier in the dark set fire to the doors; and thus, as Josephus says, the temple was burnt against the will of Cæsar.

When the soldiers had rested from their horrid work of blood and plunder, Titus gave orders to demolish the foundations of the city and the temple. But, that posterity might judge of the glory and value of his conquests, he left three towers standing as monuments of the prodigious strength and greatness of the city; and also a part of the western wall, which he designed as a rampart for a garrison to keep the surrounding country in subjection. All the other buildings were completely levelled with the ground. It is recorded by Maimonides, and likewise in the Jewish Talmud, that Terentius Rufus, an officer in the army of Titus, with a ploughshare tore up the foundations of the temple, and thus remarkably fulfilled the words of the prophet Micah: *Therefore shall Zion, for your sake, be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.* (Micah iii. 12.) The city also shared the same fate, and was burnt and destroyed together with the temple.[4] With the exception of the three towers, above mentioned as being left standing[5], all the rest of the city was so demolished and levelled with the ground that those who came to see it could not believe that it had ever been inhabited And when Titus came again to Jerusalem in his way from Syria to Egypt, and beheld the sad devastation, he bitterly lamented the cruel necessity which had compelled him to destroy so magnificent a city. After the city was thus taken and destroyed, a great quantity of riches were found by the Romans, who dug up the ruins in search of the treasures which had been concealed in the earth.[6] So literally were the words of Jesus Christ accomplished in the ruin both of the city and of the temple! Well might Eleazar say to the Jews who were besieged in the fortress of Masada — "What is become of our city, which was believed to be inhabited by God? — It is now demolished to the very foundations, and the only monument of it that is left is — the camp of those who destroyed it, which is still pitched upon its remains." Well might he express a passionate wish that they had all died before they beheld that holy city demolished by the hands of their enemies, and the sacred temple so profanely dug up from its foundation.[7]

As the Jews were to be *led away captive into all nations*, so was Jerusalem to be *trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* So completely was Judæa subjugated, that the very land itself was sold by Vespasian, the Gentiles possessing it, while the Jews were nearly all slain or led into captivity; and Jerusalem has *never since* been in the possession of the Jews. When, indeed, the emperor Hadrian visited the eastern parts of the Roman empire and found Jerusalem a heap of ruins, forty-seven years after its destruction, he determined to rebuild it; but not exactly on the same spot. He called the new city Ælia, placed a Roman colony in it, and dedicated a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, in the room of the temple of Jehovah. This profanation of the holy place was the great cause of the rebellions and sufferings of the Jews during the reign of Hadrian. The city was once more taken by them and burnt. — Hadrian rebuilt it — re-established the colony — ordered the statue of a hog (which the Jews held in religious abhorrence) to be set up over the gate that opened towards Bethlehem; and published an edict, strictly forbidding any Jew, on pain of death, to enter the city, or even to look at it from a distance. Thus the city remained, till the time of Constantine, the first

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[1] Josephus de Bell. Jud. lib. 6. c. 2. § 9.
[2] Ibid. lib. 6. c. 4. § 5.
[3] Ibid. §§ 6, 7.
[4] Ibid. lib. 6. c. 6. § 3., 7. § 2., c. 8. § 5.
[5] Ibid. lib. 7. c. 1. § 1.
[6] Ibid. lib. 7. c. 1. § 2.
[7] Ibid. lib. 7. c. 8. § 7.

Christian emperor, who greatly improved it, and restored the name of Jerusalem; but the Jews were not permitted to reside there. Attempting in vain to get possession of their capital, Constantine caused their ears to be cut off, their bodies to be marked as rebels, and dispersed them over all the provinces of the empire, as fugitives and slaves. The emperor Julian, from enmity to the Christians, favoured the Jews; and in the vain hope of contradicting the prophecy concerning it, attempted to rebuild the temple; but he was miraculously prevented, and obliged to desist from his impious undertaking. Jovian revived the severe edict of Hadrian; and the Greek emperors continued the prohibition; so that the wretched Jews used to give money to the soldiers for permission to behold and weep over the ruins of their temple and city, particularly in the return of that memorable day, on which it had been taken by the Romans. In the reign of Heraclius, Chosroes, king of Persia, took and plundered it; but Heraclius soon recovered the possession of it. — In 637, the Christians surrendered Jerusalem to Omar, the Saracen caliph, who built a mosque upon the site of Solomon's temple. It remained in the possession of the Saracens above 400 years, and then was taken by the Turks. They retained it till the year 1099, when the Franks took it under Godfrey of Boulogne, General of the Crusaders. The Franks kept possession 88 years, that is, till 1187, when the Turks, under Saladin, retook it by capitulation, and with them it has remained ever since.[1]

"Thus literally has this prophecy been hitherto fulfilled! — Jerusalem has been thus constantly trodden down of the Gentiles, — the Romans, the Saracens, the Franks, and the Turks. — Its ancient inhabitants have been expelled, and persecuted, and its holy places have been polluted. The eagles of idolatrous Rome, the crescent of the impostor Mahomet, and the banner of popery carried by the Crusaders, have been successively displayed amidst the ruins of the sanctuary of Jehovah, for nearly eighteen hundred years."[2] And the Jews are still preserved a living and continued monument of the truth of our Lord's prediction, and of the irrefragable truth of the Christian religion.

The conclusion of the prediction, however (TILL *the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled*), indicates that Jerusalem, — the city once *beautiful for situation* and *the joy of the whole earth*, —shall NOT be trodden down for ever. "The times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled, when the times of *the four great kingdoms* of the Gentiles, according to Daniel's prophecies, shall be expired, and *the fifth kingdom*, or the kingdom of Christ, shall be set up in their place, and *the Saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever*. Jerusalem, as it as hitherto remained, so probably will remain in subjection to the Gentiles, *until* these *times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*; or, as St. Paul expresses it (Rom. xi. 25, 26.), *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved*, and become again the people of God. *The fulness of the Jews* will come in as well *as the fulness of the Gentiles*. For (ver. 12. 25, 26.) *if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved.*"[3]

SECT. IV.

THAT THERE IS SALVATION ONLY THROUGH CHRIST — AND THE DANGER OF REJECTING IT.

§ 1. *That there is salvation* ONLY *through Christ.*

PROPHECY. — Zech. xiii. 1. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. —

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[1] Bp. Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies, vol. ii. pp. 57—69. The preceding account of the accomplishment of our Saviour's predictions concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the subversion of the Jewish polity, and the calamities which have befallen the Jews, are chiefly abridged from this learned prelate's eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first dissertations, with occasional assistance from Mr. Kett's History, the Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. i. pp. 288—333.

[2] Kett on Prophecy, vol. i. p. 333.

[3] Bp. Newton's Dissertations, vol. ii. p 70

Mal. iv. 2. Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise, with healing in his wings. — Isa. liii. 11. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many. — Isa. lix. 20. The Redeemer shall come to Sion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob. See Rom. xi. 26.—Ps. cxviii 22. The stone which the builders refused, the same is become the head stone of the corner. Isa. xxviii. 16.; Matt. xxi. 42.

Fulfilment. — John iii. 16. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Compare also 1 Thess. v. 9. ; John xvii. 3. — Luke xxiv. 47. That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name. See also Acts x. 43. — Acts xiii. 38, 39. Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified. — Acts iv. 11, 12. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

§ 2. *Of the necessity of believing in Christ, and the danger of rejecting him.*

Deut. xviii. 15. 19. The Lord will raise up unto thee a prophet—Unto him shall ye hearken—Whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. [In Acts iii. 23. this prediction is cited and applied to Jesus Christ.] — Numb. xv. 30, 31. The soul that doth aught presumptuously—reproacheth the Lord: and that soul shall be cut off from among his people, because he hath despised the word of the Lord.—Ps. ii. 12. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the right way.

John iii. 18. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only Son of God. — Heb. ii. 3. How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? — Heb. x. 26. 29. If we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace. — *The Lord shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Christ.* 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.

"*The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*" (Rev. xix. 10.); — and of that testimony it were easy to have offered hundreds of instances equally striking with those above given. Copious as the preceding table of prophecies is, *the selection has necessarily been restricted to* THE PRINCIPAL, in order that this article of our Appendix might not be extended to an undue length. The reader, who is desirous of seeing all (or nearly all) the predictions relative to the Messiah), is referred to Huet's "Demonstratio Evangelica," Prop. IX. (vol. ii. pp. 595—1056. Amsterdam, 1680,) and to Mr. Barker's "Messiah; being the Prophecies concerning him methodized, with their Accomplishments; London, 1780." 8vo. Both these works have been consulted in drawing up the preceding table of prophecies and their accomplishments. At the end of Vol. II. Book II. (pp. 1374—1380. of the first edition) of Dr. Hales's "Analysis of Sacred Chronology," that learned writer has given two series of the great prophecies and allusions to Christ in the Old Testament; which are expressly cited either as predictions fulfilled in him, or applied to him by way of accommodation, in the New Testament. The first of these series describes Jesus Christ in his human nature, as the

PROMISED SEED OF THE WOMAN in the grand charter of our Redemption (Gen. iii. 15.); and his pedigree, sufferings, and glory in his successive manifestations of himself, until the end of the world. The second series describes his character and offices, human and divine. Although these two series of prophecies consist only of references to the Old and New Testament, some of which necessarily coincide with the predictions above given at length; yet the biblical student will find his time not ill spent in comparing them. The series contains many titles and offices of Jesus Christ, which could not, for want of room, be inserted in this volume.

To conclude: — It is a FACT worthy of remark, and which ought never to be forgotten, that most of the prophecies, delivered in the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, were revealed nearly, and some of them more than three thousand years ago, and yet scarcely one of them can be applied to any man that ever lived upon earth except to Him, who is Immanuel, God with us, the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom *give all the prophets witness.* (Acts x. 43.) With regard to the predictions announced by Jesus the Messiah, the voice of history in every age — (and especially the present state of Jerusalem and of the Jews) — concurs to demonstrate their truth, and, consequently, the truth of the Gospel. The more, therefore, we contemplate these astonishing FACTS, — the more deeply we investigate the wonderful display of divine power, wisdom, and goodness, — the more we shall be disposed to exclaim, with the amazed centurion, — TRULY THIS WAS THE SON OF GOD.

No. VII.

PROOFS OF THE GENUINENESS OF JOSEPHUS'S TESTIMONY CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST.

[*Referred to in p.* 168. *of this Volume.*]

JOSEPHUS, though a strict Pharisee, has borne such a noble testimony to the spotless character of Jesus Christ, that Jerome considered and called him a Christian writer. Mr. Whiston, and some modern writers, are of opinion, that he was a Nazarene or Ebionite Jewish Christian; while others have affirmed, that the passage, above cited from his Jewish Antiquities, is an interpolation, principally (it should seem) on the ground that it is too favourable to be given by a Jew to Christ; and that, if Josephus did consider Jesus to be the Christ or expected Messiah of the Jews, he must have been a believer in him, in which case he would not have despatched the miraculous history of the Saviour of the World in one short paragraph. When, however, the evidence on both sides is fairly weighed, we apprehend that it will be found to preponderate most decidedly in favour of the genuineness of this testimony of Josephus: for,

1. *It is found in all the copies* of Josephus's works, which are now extant, whether printed or manuscript; in a *Hebrew* translation pre-

served in the Vatican Library [1], and in an Arabic Version preserved by the Maronites of Mount Libanus.

2. It is cited by Eusebius, Jerome, Rufinus the antagonist of Jerome, Isidore of Pelusium, Sozomen, Cassiodorus, Nicephorus, and by many other authors, Greeks, Syrians, and Egyptians, of the fourth and fifth centuries; all of whom had indisputably seen various manuscripts, and of considerable antiquity. How then can men, living eleven or twelve hundred years *after* these writers,—and who are so remote both from the sources consulted by them, as well as from the events related by them, — prove that all these ancient authors were utterly destitute of discernment, and that all sagacity is exclusively reserved for our times?

3. Josephus not only mentions with respect John the Baptist [2], but also James the first bishop of Jerusalem.—"*Ananus*" (he says) "*assembled the Jewish Sanhedrin, and brought before it* J*AMES the Brother of Jesus who is called Christ, with some others, whom he delivered over to be stoned as infractors of the law.*" [3] This passage, the authenticity of which has *never* been disputed or suspected, contains an evident reference to what had already been related concerning Christ; for why else should he describe James — a man of himself but little known — as the brother of Jesus, if he had made no mention of Jesus before?

4. It is highly improbable that Josephus, who has discussed with such minuteness the history of this period, — mentioned Judas of Galilee, Theudas, and the other obscure pretenders to the character of the Messiah, as well as John the Baptist and James the Brother of Christ,—should have preserved the profoundest silence concerning Christ, whose name was at that time so celebrated among the Jews, and also among the Romans, two of whose historians (Suetonius and Tacitus) have distinctly taken notice of him. But, in all the writings of Josephus, not a hint occurs on the subject except the testimony in question.

5. It is morally impossible that this passage either was or could be forged by Eusebius who first cited it, or by any other earlier writer. Had such a forgery been attempted, it would unquestionably have been detected by some of the acute and inveterate enemies of Christianity; for both Josephus and his works were so well received among the Romans, that he was enrolled a citizen of Rome, and had a statue erected to his memory. His writings were also admitted into the Imperial Library. The Romans may further be considered as the guardians of the integrity of his text; and the Jews, we may be assured, would use all diligence, to prevent any interpolation in favour of the Christian cause. Yet it cannot be discovered that any objection was ever made to this passage, by any of the opposers of the Christian faith in the early ages: their silence therefore concerning such a charge is a decisive proof that the passage is not a forgery.

[1] Baronius (Annales Ecclesiastici, ad annum 134.) relates that the passage in this Hebrew translation of Josephus was marked with an obelus, which could only have been done by a Jew.

[2] Ant. Jud. lib. 18. c. 5. § 2.

[3] Ibid. lib. 20. c. 8. (al. 9.) § 1.

Indeed, the Christian cause is so far from needing any fraud to support it, that nothing could be more destructive to its interest, than a fraud so palpable and obtrusive.

To this strong chain of evidence for the genuineness of Josephus's testimony, various objections have been made, of which the following are the principal:—

OBJECTION 1. — *This passage was not cited by any early Christians before Eusebius, such as Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, or Origen; nor is it cited by Chrysostom or Photius, who lived after his time.*

ANSWER.—There is no strength in this negative argument against Eusebius, drawn from the silence of the ancient fathers. The fathers did not cite the testimony of Josephus, 1. either because they had no copies of his works; or, 2. because his testimony was foreign to the design which they had in writing; which was, to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah, out of the Old Testament, and, consequently, they had no need of other evidence; or, 3. because, on account of this very testimony, the evidence of Josephus was disregarded by the Jews themselves.[1]

OBJECTION 2. — *The passage in question interrupts the order of the narration, and is unlike the style of Josephus.*

ANSWER.—It is introduced naturally in the course of the historian's narrative, the order of which it does *not* disturb. It is introduced under the article of Pilate, and connected with two circumstances, which occasioned disturbances; and was not the putting of Jesus to death, and the continuance of the apostles and disciples after him, declaring his resurrection another very considerable circumstance, which created very great disturbances? And though Josephus does not say this in express terms, yet he intimates it, by connecting it with the two causes of commotion, by giving so honourable a testimony to Jesus, and telling us that he was crucified at the instigation of the chief persons of the Jewish nation. It would scarcely have been decent in him to have said more on this head. The following view of the connection of the passage now under consideration will confirm and illustrate the preceding remarks:—

In his Jewish Antiquities (book xviii. c. i.) he relates, in the first section, that Pilate introduced Cæsar's images into Jerusalem, and that, in consequence of this measure producing a tumult, he commanded them to be carried thence to Cæsarea. In the second section, he gives an account of Pilate's attempt to bring a current of water to Jerusalem, the expense of which he defrayed out of the sacred money; this also caused a tumult, in which a great number of Jews were slain. In the third section he relates that *about the same time* Pilate crucified Jesus, who was called Christ, a wise and holy man; and (§ 4.) *about the same time also*, he adds, another sad calamity put the Jews into disorder, which he promises to narrate after he had given an account of a most flagitious crime which was perpetrated at Rome in the temple of Isis: and after detailing all its circumstances, he proceeds (§ 5.), agreeably to his promise, to describe the expulsion of the Jews from Rome, by the emperor Tiberius, in consequence of the villanous conduct of four of their countrymen. Such is the connection of the whole chapter; and when it is fairly considered we may safely challenge any one to say, whether the passage under consideration interrupts the order of the narration: on the contrary, if it be taken out, that connection is irrecoverably broken. It is manifest, that Josephus relates events in the order in which they happened, and that they are connected together only by the time when they took place.

With regard to the objection that the passage in question is unlike the style of Josephus, it is sufficient to reply in the quaint but expressive language of Huet, that *one egg is not more like another, than is the style of this passage to the general*

[1] The above refuted objection is examined in detail by Professor Vernet, in his Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tome ix. pp. 165—221.

style of his writings. Objections from style are often fanciful; and Daubuz has proved, by actual collation, the perfect coincidence between its style and that of Josephus in other parts of his works.[1] This objection, therefore, falls to the ground.

OBJECTION 3. — *The testimony of Josephus concerning Jesus could not possibly have been recorded by him; for he was not only a Jew, but also rigidly attached to the Jewish religion. The expressions are not those of a Jew, but of a Christian.*

ANSWER. — Josephus was not so addicted to his own religion, as to approve the conduct and opinion of the Jews concerning Christ and his doctrine. From the moderation which pervades his whole narrative of the Jewish war, it may justly be inferred, that the fanatic fury, which the chief men of his nation exercised against Christ could not but have been displeasing to him. He has rendered that attestation to the innocence, sanctity, and miracles of Christ which the fidelity of history required; nor does it follow that he was necessitated to renounce on this account the religion of his fathers. Either the common prejudices of the Jews, that their Messiah would be a victorious and temporal sovereign, or the indifference so prevalent in many towards controverted questions, might have been sufficient to prevent him from renouncing the religion in which he had been educated, and embracing a new one, the profession of which was attended with danger; or else he might think himself at liberty to be either a Jew or a Christian, as the same God was worshipped in both systems of religion. On either of these suppositions, Josephus might have written every thing which this testimony contains, as will be evident from the following critical examination of the passage.

The expression, "*if it be lawful to call him a man*," does not imply that Josephus believed Christ to be God, but only an extraordinary man, one whose wisdom and works had raised him above the common condition of humanity. He represents him as having "*performed many wonderful works*." In this there is nothing singular, for the Jews themselves, his contemporaries, acknowledge that he wrought many mighty works. Compare Matt. xiii. 54., xiv. 2. &c., and the parallel passages in the other Gospels. Josephus further says, that "*he was a teacher of such men as gladly received the truth with pleasure*," — both because the moral precepts of Christ were such as Josephus approved, and also because the disciples of Christ were influenced by no other motive than the desire of discerning it. "*He drew over to him many, both Jews and Gentiles*." How true this was, at the time when Josephus wrote, it is unnecessary to show. The phrase, "*This was the Christ*," — (ὁ Χριστος ουτος ἠν), by no means intimates that Jesus was the Messiah, but only that he was the person called Christ both by the Christians and Romans, just as if we should say, "This was the same man as he named Christ." Jesus was a common name, and would not have sufficiently pointed out the person intended to the Greeks and Romans. The name by which he was known to them was *Chrestus* or *Christus*, as we read in Suetonius and Tacitus; and if (as there is every reason to believe) Tacitus had read Josephus, he most probably took this very name from the Jewish historian. With regard to the resurrection of Christ and the prophecies referring to him, Josephus rather speaks the language used by the Christians than his own private opinion, or else he thought that Christ had appeared after his arrival, and that the prophets had foretold this event, — a point which, if admitted, and if he had been consistent, ought to have induced him to embrace Christianity. But it will readily be imagined that there might be many circumstances to prevent him becoming a proselyte, nor is it either new or wonderful that men, especially in their religious concerns, should contradict themselves, and withstand the conviction of their own minds. It is certain that, in our own times, no one has spoken in higher terms concerning Christ than Rousseau[2]; who, nevertheless, not only in his other writings, but also in the very

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[1] See Daubuz, Pro Testimonio Josephi de Jesu Christo, contra Tan. Fabrum et alios (8vo. Lond. 1706), pp. 128—205. The whole of this Dissertation is reprinted at the end of the second volume of Havercamp's edition of Josephus's works. Mr. Whiston has abridged the collation of Daubuz in Dissertation I. pp. v.—vii. prefixed to his translation of the Jewish historian. London, 1737, folio. Bosii Exercitatio Critica ad Flavii Josephi Periocham de Jesu Christo, annexed to Ottii Spicilegium ex Josepho. Lug. Bat. 1741, 8vo.

[2] See Rousseau's eulogium on the Character of Jesus Christ, pp. 375, 376. *suprà.*

work that contains the very eloquent eulogium alluded to, inveighs against Christianity with acrimony and rancour.[1]

The whole of the evidence concerning the much litigated passage of Josephus is now before the reader; who, on considering it in all its bearings will doubtless agree with the writer of these pages, that it is GENUINE, and consequently affords a noble testimony to the credibility of the facts related in the New Testament.

No. VIII

ALLEGED CONTRADICTIONS TO PHILOSOPHY AND THE NATURE OF THINGS.

[*Referred to in p.* 404. *suprà.*]

THE Scriptures often refer to matters of fact, which have been asserted to be contradictory to philosophy and to the nature of things. A little consideration, however, will reconcile these alleged repugnances: for the Scriptures were not written with the design of teaching us natural philosophy, but to make known the revealed will of God to man, and to teach us our obligations to our great Creator and Redeemer. Therefore the sacred penmen might make use of popular expressions and forms of speech, neither affirming nor denying their philosophical truth. All proverbial sayings and metaphorical expressions introduced by way of illustration or ornament must be taken from received notions; but they are not, therefore, asserted in the philosophical sense by him who uses them, any more than the historical truth of parables and similitudes is supposed to be asserted. Further, to have employed philosophical terms and notions only, and to have rectified the vulgar conceptions of men concerning all the phenomena incidentally mentioned in the Scriptures, would have required a large system of philosophy, which would have rendered the Scriptures a book unfit for ordinary capacities, and for the greater part of those for whom it is designed. If, indeed, revelation had introduced any the best founded system of modern physics, or if the Almighty Creator had been pleased to disclose the counsels themselves of His infinite wisdom, what would have been the consequence? Philosophy would immediately have become matter of faith, and disbelief of any part of it a dangerous heresy. How many infidels would this or that

[1] Appendix to the Life of Dr. Lardner, Nos. IX. and X. 4to. vol. v. pp. xlv.—xlviii. Works, 8vo. vol. i. pp. clv.—clxviii. Vernet, Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne, tome ix. pp. 1—236. Huet, Demonstr. Evang. vol. i. pp. 46—56. Œuvres de Nonotte, tom. vi. pp. 382—391. Colonia, La Religion Chrétienne Autorisée par des Auteurs Païens (Paris, 1826, 2nd edit.), pp. 360—379. In pp. 395—485. his editor, the Abbé Labouderie, has reprinted David Martin's elaborate Dissertation sur le Témoignage rendu à Jesus Christ par Josèphe, dans les Antiquités Judaiques, liv. 18. chap. 4. Bretschneider's Capita Theologiæ Judæorum Dogmaticæ, e Flavii Josephi Scriptis collecta (8vo. Lipsiæ, 1812), pp. 59—64. See also the Testimony of Josephus ably vindicated in Mr. Bryant's Vindiciæ Flavianæ, or a Vindication of the Testimony given by Josephus concerning our Saviour Jesus Christ (London, 1780, 8vo.); and in Friedrich Hermann Schoedel's Flavius Josephus de Jesu Christo testatus, Vindiciæ Flavianæ. Lipsiæ, 1840, 8vo.

man's fanciful hypothesis concerning the appearances of things have called forth! Besides, if the Scriptures had been made the vehicle of a refined system of natural philosophy, such a theory of nature would have seemed as strange and incredible to most men as miracles do; for there is scarcely any thing which more surprises men, unacquainted with philosophy, than philosophical discoveries. How incredible do the *motion* of the earth and the *rest* of the sun appear to all but philosophers, who are now fully convinced of the reality of these phenomena, while the rising and setting of the sun are terms as much in use with those who hold the doctrine of the earth's motion as with others! In fact, if we would be understood, we must continue to make use of this expression; but excepting this one instance, which is and ever will be in use, according to the vulgar conceptions of all nations and languages, (notwithstanding any philosophical discoveries to the contrary,) there is nothing in the Scriptures that is not strictly consistent with the present notions of philosophy. The discoveries in Geology and the other Natural Sciences, which have been made in later times, concur in many instances to confirm and elucidate the Sacred Writings. A few examples will illustrate the preceding observations.

1. No fact recorded in the Sacred Writings has been a more favourite subject of cavil with modern objectors, than the Mosaic Account of the creation, related in the first chapter of the book of Genesis, which some have affirmed to be contradicted by geological investigations. But these investigations, it is now known, all prove the perfect harmony between Scripture and geology in reference to the history of creation.

That history "does not confine the works of God to six days. It speaks of at least two distinct periods of divine operation:—the one, when *God created the heavens and the earth*; and another quite distinct from this, when, on six successive days, He wrought certain wonderful operations, among which man was created. The stupendous act of creation, of bringing into actual existence the constituent elements of nature, was the event set forth in the first period; for it was *in the beginning* that *God created the heavens and the earth.*[1] But that the six days' operation was the next or second work of God is neither said nor implied in the sacred narrative. What period elapsed between the first act of creation is not stated; and what wonderful operations were accomplished during that interval, are not recorded. Respecting both the intervening period and the intervening works, the Scriptures

[1] "These few first words of Genesis may be fairly appealed to by the geologist as containing a brief statement of the creation of the material elements, at a time distinctly preceding the operations of the first day. It is nowhere affirmed that God created the heavens and the earth in the *first day*, but *in the beginning*: this beginning may have been an epoch at an unmeasured distance, followed by periods of undefined duration, during which all the physical operations disclosed by geology were going on. The first verse of Genesis, therefore, seems explicitly to assert the creation of the universe, 'the heavens' including the sidereal systems; 'the earth' more especially specifying our own planet as the subsequent scene of the operations about to be described. No information is given as to events which may have occurred upon this earth, unconnected with the history of man, between the creation of its component matter, recorded in the first verse, and the era at which its history is resumed in the second verse. Nor is any limit fixed to the time during which these intermediate events may have been going on: millions of millions of years may have occupied the indefinite interval between the beginning, in which God created the heaven and the earth, and the evening or commencement of the Mosaic narrative." Dr. Buckland's Bridgewater Treatise, vol. i. pp. 20—24. second edition.

are silent, because it was not necessary to our welfare; it being the object of revelation not to teach us the sciences, nor to set forth specially all the operations of the Almighty, but to teach us our relation to God and our duty towards Him. The distinct and independent form, therefore, in which the first verse of Genesis stands with respect to those which follow, and the entire silence of Scripture as to both the period and the operations, which might occur between the actual creation of the universe in the beginning and the more detailed operations during the six days, give a latitude for the supposition of intervening ages, and myriads of intervening operations, and thus perfectly harmonise with the deductions of geology. The Scriptures plainly declare that God is the author of all things; and they teach us also the very recent existence of man and the present order of things. Geology confirms both these truths: and by unfolding to us successive revolutions, which transpired between the first fiat of creation and the more recent changes when man was brought into existence, abundantly refutes the atheistic notion of an eternal succession; and adds a mass of important evidence to the fundamental truth of theology."[1]

Further, Moses represents the earth (Gen. i. 2.) as existing in a state of fluidity. A tradition of the same fact reached some of the ancient philosophers; and Thales, in particular, one of the Seven Wise Men and the wisest of them all (as Cicero informs us), said that all things were made out of water.[2] Others after him taught the same doctrine[3]; and is it in the least degree contradicted or disproved by modern discoveries? On the contrary, is it not more and more confirmed and illustrated by them? It is well known that if a soft or elastic globular body be rapidly whirled round on its axis, the parts of the poles will be flattened, and the parts on the equator, midway between the north and south poles, will be raised up. This is precisely the shape of our earth; it has the figure of an oblate spheroid, a figure bearing a close resemblance to that of an orange. Now, if the earth was ever in a state of fluidity, its revolution round its axis must necessarily induce such a figure, because the greatest centrifugal force must necessarily be near the equatorial parts, and, consequently, there the fluid must rise and swell most. It has been *demonstrated* by experiment, that the earth is flattened at the poles and raised at the equator[4]; and thus do the Scriptures and philosophy agree together and confirm each other. The Scriptures assert that the earth was in a state of fluidity; and philosophy evinces that it must have been in such a state from its very figure.

"But the" veracity and "inspiration of Moses will appear more clear, if we proceed to observe his statement respecting the order of God's works. We find that, after the creation of the earth in the mass or chaotic state, the first effort of divine power was put forth in the production of light, then in the separation of land and water, then in the production of the vegetable creation, then of the sun and moon, thence proceeding to fishes, then to birds, afterwards to quadrupeds, and, finally to man. It might have been supposed that the question as to the precise succession of these different orders was one which never could be determined, nor even approached, and, therefore, that an impostor, or a mere speculator, would not have concerned himself about the order; because he would never have suspected that it was a point on which his accuracy could possibly be tested. But, in the present case, the geologists have proceeded quite irrespective of Moses, many of them with views, in the first instance, far from friendly to him; often, it is to be feared, with an intention to confront and overthrow his statements. But what are now the conclusions at which they have arrived by pursuing their own independent reasonings? It is, that the order of creation in these various particulars must have been nearly, perhaps exactly,

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[1] Cooke's Theiotes, p. 41. [London 1849], 8vo.

[2] Thales enim Milesius, qui primus de talibus rebus quæsivit, aquam dixit esse initium rerum. Cicero de Natura Deorum, lib. i. c. 10. Edit. Davisii.

[3] The reader will find the sentiments of the philosophers above alluded to in the notes to Grotius de Veritate, lib. i. c. 16.

[4] This was first conjectured by Sir Isaac Newton, and confirmed by Cassini and others, who measured several degrees of latitude at the equator and at the north pole, and found that the difference perfectly justified Sir Isaac Newton's conjecture, and, consequently, confirmed the truth of the Mosaic narrative. The result of the experiments, instituted to determine this point, proved that the diameter of the earth at the *equator* is greater by more than *twenty-three miles* than it is *at the poles*.

as given in Genesis. Discoveries which it was little expected could ever be made, have pointed out singular coincidences with these particulars, and have thereby verified the scriptural account.

"There appears, in the Mosaic record, a remarkable statement in reference to light, which has often been appealed to by infidel objectors, as a decisive proof of the inaccuracy and self-contradiction of the writer. It is stated, in the first chapter of Genesis, that God said, on the first day, 'Let light be,' and yet it is distinctly represented afterwards, that the sun and moon were not created, or made to shine upon our earth, until the fourth day. It has long been deemed impossible to reconcile these apparently hostile and contradictory accounts. Yet it is difficult to conceive that an impostor would have hazarded a statement so obviously contrary to probability, so apparently chargeable with inconsistency, and so unlikely to gain credit with those who reasoned upon appearances, and judged only by their senses. But how singular is the fact, that the modern discoveries of astronomy have rendered it more than probable, that luminous bodies in the heavens first exist as a diffused and expanded element, before they become condensed into a regularly formed and compact mass. Dr. Buckland observes: — 'It appears highly probable that light is not a material substance, but only an effect of undulations of ether; that this infinitely subtile and elastic ether pervades all space, and even the interior of all bodies; so long as it remains at rest, there is total darkness; when it is put into a peculiar state of vibration, the sensation of light is produced; this sensation may be excited by various causes, *e. g.* by the sun, by the stars, by electricity, combustion, &c. If, then, light be not a substance, but only a series of vibrations of ether, *i. e.* an effect produced on a subtile fluid, by the excitement of one or many extraneous causes, it can hardly be said, nor is it said, in Gen. i. 3., to have been *created*, though it may be literally said to be called into action.'[1] The discoveries and observations of the late Sir W. Herschel, continued through a long life, first made it probable that a process, similar to that only briefly stated by Moses, is continually going on in the remote parts of the heavenly system. Herschel's observations have been confirmed by his son, and many other eminent philosophers.

"Upon the admission of this theory we perceive a beautiful harmony with the systems of incipient organisation which the geologists maintain. A long antecedent preparation is shown to have been going on, both of the heavens and the earth, for the reception of the noblest and most richly endowed of all sensitive beings; the only one destined to bear, in an emphatic sense, 'the image of God.' Moses, then, is not to be understood as saying, that on the first of the six days' work the element of light was called into existence; for the previous existence of light, to some considerable degree, seems now unquestionable, from the facts which geology has established; the existence of vegetation, in many analogous species to our present vegetation, and the provision made, in the extinct races of animals, for the exercise of the faculty of vision, evidently demonstrating the same, or nearly the same relation between their optical organs and the element of light, as now prevails. But at the period referred to by the Mosaic statement, light may have attained that degree of condensation which was requisite to constitute it a defined orb, and the expression 'Let light be,' may express its more perfected and *recommencing* operation in the mundane system, after that cataclysm which, it is supposed, destroyed the previous creation of animal and vegetable tribes, and marked the commencement of the new and more perfect creation which was to accompany the introduction of the human race, and to indicate the adaptation of all things to their use and comfort. So far, then, we conceive the discoveries of our modern geology, though they modify in some degree our interpretation of the Mosaic account, are by no means hostile to it, but rather serve to illustrate and confirm it; and especially so, by demonstrating the absence of all facts that could clash with the Mosaic date of the present races of living beings. The declaration of Moses, that the earth in the beginning or prior to the first day, was without form and void, and that darkness was upon the face of the deep, seems both to imply that it had a previous existence, and that it had undergone an entire disruption of its surface and destruction of its organised contents, to make way for the new and higher order of things just about to be introduced;

[1] Bridgewater Treatise, vol. i. p. 32.

and thus it coincides with the whole theory of geology, and receives most valuable confirmation from its sublime discoveries."[1]

2. The Mosaic narrative of the DELUGE has also been a favourite theme of cavil among the opposers of revelation, as being contrary to the discoveries of scientific investigation; but with how little foundation, will be evident from a brief statement of facts.

"It will form a good presumptive proof that Moses is correct in this matter, if it shall appear that ethnical traditions generally, and still more if they do universally, commence with this fact."[2] On referring to pp. 155—157. of this volume, it will be seen how fully the Mosaic narrative is corroborated by the historical traditions of that event universally prevalent in the ancient world, and which are also found among modern nations of different degrees of civilisation. Now "this harmony among all nations could have arisen only from the fact itself. . . . There is no clashing testimony to be derived from the traditionary accounts either of the ancient or modern nations. They all embody but one story characteristically varied."[3] These traditions do not, indeed, prove that the Noachian deluge was geographically universal; but they do most clearly prove that it was universal ethnographically; in other words (as the best expositors of Scripture are now of opinion), that it was local though of great extent, and that it overwhelmed the universal or entire race of mankind by whom the world was then actually peopled, and concerning whom only Moses wrote. The language of Scripture certainly seems, at first sight, most unqualified. *The waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered* (Gen. vii. 19.). "If such language be interpreted by the same rules which we should apply to a modern composition, it could no way be understood to teach a limited deluge, or a partial destruction. But in respect to this ancient record, two considerations are to be carefully weighed: —

(1.) "In the first place, the terms employed are not to be judged of by the state of knowledge in the nineteenth century, but by its state among the people to whom this revelation was first addressed. When the earth was spoken of to that people (the ancient Jews), they could not have understood it to embrace a much wider region than that inhabited by man, because they could not have had any idea of what lay beyond those limits. And so of the phrase *heaven*, it must have been co-extensive with the inhabited earth only. And when it was said that all animals would die by the deluge" [Gen. vi. 17.], "they could not have supposed the declaration to embrace creatures far beyond the dwellings of men, because they knew nothing of such regions. Why, then, may we not attach the same limited meaning to these declarations? Why should we suppose that the Holy Spirit used terms, adapted indeed to the astronomy and geography of the nineteenth century, but conveying only a false idea to those to whom they were addressed?"[4]

(2.) In the second place, "to those who have studied the phraseology of Scripture, there is no rule of interpretation more certain than this, that *universal terms* are often used to signify only a *very large* amount in number or quantity."[5] Thus we read in Gen. ii. 20., that *Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowls of the air, and to every beast of the field.*

"If we reflect for a moment, we perceive that this statement, when interpreted according to its letter, involves something like an impossibility; and what need was there to name any animals beyond those which were to serve man, and form the subject of his discourse? We are informed that in consequence of the murrain '*all the cattle of Egypt died;*' and yet some escaped; for it is afterwards mentioned that, by a subsequent plague, the Lord '*smote all that was in the field, both man and beast.*' (Exod. ix. 6. 25.) When it is averred that '*all countries,*' we can only under-

[1] Dr. Redford's Holy Scripture Verified, pp. 27—31. Second edition. The reader who is desirous of investigating the Harmony of Scripture with Geology is referred to Dr. Pye Smith's Relation between the Holy Scriptures and some parts of Geological Science, fourth or fifth edition; Dr. Hitchcock's Religion of Geology and its connected Sciences; Dr. King's Principles of Geology explained, and viewed in their relations to Revealed and Natural Religion; and especially Mr. Crofton's Genesis and Geology.

[2] Redford's Holy Scripture Verified, p. 80.

[3] Ibid. p. 82.

[4] Hitchcock's Religion of Geology, p. 119.

[5] Dr. Pye Smith's Geology and Scripture, p. 268. Fifth edition.

stand that some countries '*came into Egypt to Joseph to buy corn*' (Gen. xli. 57.); and a limited portion of the habitable world must be intended by that '*all the earth*' (1 Kings iv. 34.) which sought to hear the wisdom of Solomon. Within a certain vessel Peter could only see some samples, when he is represented to have seen '*all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.*' (Acts x. 10, 11.) At the time the Epistle to the Colossians was written, most of the world was in heathen darkness, and in utter ignorance of the true religion; yet in that epistle Paul speaks of '*the gospel which was preached to every creature under heaven.*' (Col. i. 23.) He could not mean to expose himself to the charge of palpable untruth. In all these, and many like cases, we readily and necessarily assign a modified sense to absolute terms. There is no reason why this principle of interpretation should be held to be inapplicable to the history of the deluge.

"The difficulties which beset the idea of a universal deluge, irrespectively of geological discoveries, have induced many expositors, both ancient and modern, to believe that it was limited.

"Even when we take the largest estimate of the size of the ark, its dimensions exclude the supposition that it contained all land animals, and the food necessary for their preservation. The number of species of terrestrial mammiferæ alone is, on a moderate calculation, about seven hundred; and as they entered the ark by pairs, this gives us fourteen hundred individuals. Some of the animals were of great bulk. There are two species of living elephants, probably seven kinds of rhinoceros, besides many gigantic species of the ox tribe, of deer, antelopes, &c. In addition, we have about four thousand species of birds, after deducting aquatic fowls. As to insects, there must be, according to the estimate of able naturalists, above two hundred thousand of them. Then we have to find place for a sufficiency of food. The carnivoræ would require an ample supply of prey. In some instances the sustenance needed to be of a kind which could scarcely be stored up, for how could the ant-eaters be provided with their ant-hills?

"All the difficulties are not involved in the question of adequate accommodation. America has its peculiar animals, so has New Holland, and the same observation applies to Africa and Asia, and even to their associated islands, Madagascar, Java, Borneo, &c. How were the animals to be transported from these regions and back again, and how were they to find their proper food and temperature by the way?[1] Difficulties multiply upon us the longer we consider the subject. Many plants would be destroyed by a marine deluge, as certainly as animals, and would equally require to be sheltered from the salt water.

"It is true that all these obstructions could have been removed by miracles. A miracle could have brought the animals together, and afterwards restored them to their respective domains. A miracle could have reduced their dimensions, and made them small enough to be contained in the ark. . . . Another miracle could have supplied the animals with their proper food, or changed their mode of life altogether. But the supposition of such miracles is highly improbable, not to say irreverent. When we are confuting the prodigies of the heathen, we are accustomed to point out their want of adequate object—their apparent uselessness; and we ought not rashly to expose the miracles of Scripture to a similar reproach.

"If we adopt the principle which Scripture itself so unequivocally sanctions—that general terms may be used with a limited sense—the whole account is simple and consistent. A deluge of great extent inundated the dry land. In respect to men, whom it was designed to punish for their wickedness, it was universal, except-

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[1] "'If anything more were required to show the partial location of birds, the Galapagos archipelago might be mentioned: of twenty-six specimens shot by Mr. Darwin, twenty-five were peculiar, though bearing a strong resemblance to American types; some birds were even confined to particular islands; and the gulls, one of the most widely-dispersed families, are peculiar. But on this comparatively recent volcanic group, only 500 miles distant from the coast of America, everything is peculiar, birds, plants, reptiles, and fish, and though under the equator, all have sober covering. . . . The distribution of animals is guided by laws analogous to those which regulate the distribution of plants, insects, fishes, and birds. Each continent, and even different parts of the same continent, are centres of zoological families, which have always existed there, and nowhere else; each group being almost always specifically different from all others.'—Physical Geography, by Mary Somerville, vol. ii. pp. 210. 218."

ing only Noah and his family, whom it pleased God to spare alive. Along with them were preserved such animals as were most useful to them, and such as were fitted to fulfil the purposes of Providence after the waters should have retired:"[1]— so that (as Dr. Pye Smith has most truly remarked), "we are exonerated from some otherwise insuperable difficulties in natural history and geology. If so much of the earth was overflowed as was occupied by the human race, both the physical and the moral ends of that awful visitation were answered."[2] This also was the opinion of the following eminent biblical scholars, all of whom wrote long before any question arose on the subject of the deluge in consequence of geological discussions, viz., Bishop Stillingfleet[3], Matthew Poole[4], Jean Le Clerc[5], J. A. Dathe[6], and J. G. Rosenmüller[7]; whose son, E. F. C. Rosenmüller, in his Scholia on Gen. vii., has given a condensed statement of the reasons, which induced the majority of continental biblical writers (to whose judgment he accedes), at the close of the eighteenth century, to conclude that the deluge did not extend to the entire globe.[8]

Decisive as the preceding facts and considerations are, it has been attempted (but in vain) to set aside the Mosaic narrative of the deluge by various objections drawn from physical observation. Thus,

[i.] It has been attempted to set aside the Mosaic narrative, by some marks of antiquity, which (it has been alleged) existed in the strata of the lava of Mount Ætna. Count Borch, towards the close of the eighteenth century, attempted to prove that mountain to be *eight thousand* years old, by the different strata of lava discovered therein: and in the vaults and pits, sunk to a great depth about Ætna, the Canon Ricupero affirmed that seven strata of lava had been found, each with a surface of soil upon it, which (he assumed) would require two thousand years to

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[1] King's Principles of Geology explained and applied in their relations to Natural and Revealed Religion, pp. 85—90. Second edition.

[2] Smith's Relation between the Holy Scriptures and Geological Science, p. 271.

[3] The judgment of Bishop Stillingfleet (first published in 1663) is particularly valuable: —"I cannot see any urgent necessity, from the Scripture, to assert that the flood did spread itself over all the surface of the earth. That all mankind (those in the ark excepted) were destroyed by it is most certain, according to the Scriptures. When the occasion of the flood is thus expressed — *And God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of all the earth* (Gen. vi. 5. 7.) — it could not be, then, any particular deluge of so small a country as *Palestine* which is here expressed, as some have ridiculously imagined; for we find an *universal corruption* in the earth mentioned as the cause; an *universal* threatening upon all men for this cause, and afterwards an *universal destruction* expressed, as the effect of this flood. *And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, and every man. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man and cattle, and the creeping things and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth. And Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.* (Gen. vii. 21. 23.) So, then, it is evident that the flood was universal *as to mankind*, but from thence follows no necessity at all of asserting the universality of it as to the globe of the earth, unless it be sufficiently proved that the whole earth was peopled before the flood, which I despair of seeing ever proved. And what reason can there be to extend the flood beyond the occasion of it, which was *the corruption of mankind?*" . . . "I grant, as far as the flood extended, all these" [the several kinds of beasts, creeping things, and fowls] "were destroyed; but I see no reason to extend the destruction of these beyond that compass and space of earth where men inhabited; because the punishment upon the beasts was occasioned by, but could not be concomitant with, the destruction of mankind. But (the occasion of the deluge being the sin of man, who was punished in the beasts that were destroyed for his sake, as well as in himself) where the occasion was not, as where there were animals and no men, there seems no necessity of extending the flood thither. Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ, book iii. chap. iv. sect. 3. pp. 539, 540. London, 1663 (or pp. 337, 338. London, 1709; or Works, vol. ii. pp. 337, 338.)

[4] Poli Synopsis Criticorum Sacrorum, vol. i col. 98. Londini, 1669.

[5] Mosis Prophetæ Libri quinque . . . ex translatione Joannis Clerici, cum ejusdem . . . Commentario, pp. 66—71. Amsteldami, 1735.

[6] Pentateuchus, a J. A. Dathio, pp. 60, 61. Halæ, 1781.

[7] J. G. Rosenmülleri Antiqui prima Telluris Historia, a Mose Gen. i. descripta, pp. 6. 10—12. 71. Ulmæ, 1776.

[8] E. F. C. Rosenmülleri Scholia in Vetus Testamentum, Pars i. pp. 92—94. Lipsiæ, 1795

accumulate upon each stratum; and, reasoning from analogy, he calculated that the lowest of these strata *must* have flowed from the mountain *fourteen thousand years ago!*

ANSWER. — Nothing can be more fallacious than this argument, if indeed it deserves to be dignified with the name of an argument. For, who knows what causes have operated to produce volcanic eruptions at very unequal periods? Who has kept a register of the eruptions of any burning mountain for one thousand years, to say nothing of three or four thousand? Who can say that the strata of earth were formed in equal periods? The time for the formation of the uppermost and last is probably not known, much less the respective periods of the lower strata. One might have been formed in a year, another in a century. The philosophers above mentioned are wholly ignorant of the cause of any one of these earthy strata. They build one hypothesis upon another, and to believe their whole argument requires stronger faith than to believe a miracle. Faith in a miracle rests upon testimony; but faith in their scheme must be founded on an extreme desire to prove a falsehood. But the analogy, on which it has been attempted to build the hypothesis just mentioned, is contradicted by another analogy, which is grounded on more certain facts.

Ætna and Vesuvius resemble each other in the causes that produce their eruptions, in the nature of their lavas, and in the time necessary to mellow them into soil fit for vegetation. This being admitted, which no philosopher will deny, the Canon Recupero's analogy will prove just nothing at all. We can produce an instance of *seven* different lavas, with *interjacent strata of vegetable earth*, which have flowed from Mount Vesuvius within the space, not of *fourteen thousand*, but of somewhat less than *fourteen hundred years;* for then, according to our analogy, a stratum of lava may be covered with vegetable soil in about *two hundred and fifty years*, instead of requiring two thousand for that purpose. The eruption of Vesuvius, which destroyed Herculaneum and Pompeii, is rendered still more celebrated by the death of the elder Pliny, recorded in his nephew's letter to Tacitus. This event happened A. D. 79; but we are informed by unquestionable authority [1] that the matter which covers Herculaneum is not the produce of one eruption only, for there are evident marks, that the matter of *six* eruptions has taken its course over that which lies immediately over the town, and which was the cause of its destruction: and these strata are either of lava or of burnt matter, *with veins of good soil between.* Whence it is evident, with what ease a *little attention* and increase of knowledge may remove a great difficulty.[2]

[ii.] "The size of the ark has been alleged as quite insufficient to contain the animals and their food. But this objection overlooks the statement that these animals were brought together by miracle; that the ark was prepared under Divine direction; that though the number of animals is large, yet by far the greater part of them are comparatively small; that in a state of confinement in the ark they would require much less food than when free; that many of them would be in a torpid state, and all of them so influenced by the mighty power of the Creator as to meet the circumstances in which they were placed. Miracle is alleged to account for the whole. Whether all the species of animals now known were there or not cannot be determined by any calculations of the capacity of the ark; since no one can say how many it could or could not contain when the Creator interfered to make it his instrument for preserving both man and the animals." [3]

3. As the same causes must always produce the same effects it is objected as an absurdity in the Mosaic history (Gen. ix. 13.) to speak of the rainbow as formed *after* the flood, and as the sign of a covenant *then* made; because, as that phenomenon results from the immutable laws of the refraction and reflection of the sun's rays on drops of falling rain, it is certain that the rainbow must have been occasionally exhibited from the beginning of the world.

[1] Sir W. Hamilton's Remarks on the Nature of the Soil of Naples and its Vicinity, in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, vol. lxi. p. 7.

[2] Bp. Watson's Apology for Christianity, in reply to Gibbon, pp. 255—263. London, 1776; or pp. 151—156. of the 8vo. edition. London, 1806.

[3] Redford's Holy Scripture Verified, p. 95

ANSWER. — But the original does not say that God set the rainbow in the clouds. The word translated, *I do* SET *my bow in the cloud*, may be (as indeed it ought to be) rendered, with great propriety, *I do* APPOINT *my bow in the cloud, to be a sign* or *token of the covenant between me and the earth*; and a fit sign it certainly was, because the patriarch knew that there never was, nor ever can be, a rainbow, but when there is sunshine as well as rain. "What purpose then was served by the rainbow? The very best purpose, so well expressed by the sacred historian, when he represents God as saying, *This is the token of the covenant, which I will make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you,* FOR PERPETUAL GENERATIONS; for natural and inanimate objects, — such as pillars and heaps of stones, — were considered as tokens, and even a kind of witnesses, in the contracts of all the civilised nations of remote antiquity. Of this we have several instances in the books of the Old Testament, but surely not one so apposite as that of the rainbow. Noah and his sons undoubtedly knew, — either by the science of the antediluvian world, or by the immediate teaching of God, — that the rainbow is a physical proof, as long as it is seen, that a general deluge is not to be dreaded: and therefore, if their minds, filled with terror and astonishment at what they had escaped, should ever have become fearfully apprehensive of a future deluge, the sight of the bow would immediately dissipate their fears. The science of Noah and his sons, which taught them the physical connection of the sign, and the thing signified, was soon lost, with other truths of greater importance, when their descendants were scattered in small tribes over the face of the whole earth: but the remembrance of the flood, as well as some confused notions of the rainbow being a kind of information from the gods to men, appear to have been preserved by tradition among all nations: and thousands of pious Christians, without knowing any thing of the physical causes of the rainbow, consider it at this day as a token, and even a pledge (as in truth it is), that the earth will not again be destroyed by a deluge."[1]

4. If all mankind sprang from Noah, the second parent of the human race, it is impossible to account for the origin of the *blacks*, if the patriarch and his wife were *white*.

ANSWER. — But this difference in colour does not invalidate the narrative of Moses: for it has been ascertained that the influence of climate, and the local circumstances of air, water, food, customs, &c. are sufficient to account for the dissimilarity which is discovered in the appearance of different nations. If *dogs*, taken to the frigid zone, grow shaggy; and if *sheep*, transported to the torrid zone, exchange their wool for hair, why may not the human species gradually partake of the influence of climate? as experience shows that it does.[2]

Man was formed to reside in all climates. "Man," says the eminent naturalist, Buffon, who was by no means a bigot in favour of the Scripture history, "though *white* in Europe, *black* in Africa[3], *yellow* in Asia, and *red* in America, is still the same animal, tinged only with the colour of the climate. Where the heat is exces-

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[1] Bp. Gleig's edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible, vol. i. p. 204. note.

[2] The testimony of M. De Pages, who himself experienced this change, is particularly worthy of notice. In his Travels round the World, during the years 1767—1771, speaking of his passage over the Great Desert, he says, "The Arabs, who frequent the middle of the Desert, have their hair almost frizzled, fine, and of the same nature as that of the negroes" [that is, woolly]. "During the short period of my passage, my own hair became more dry and delicate; and, receiving no nourishment for want of perspiration, showed a tendency to assume the same frizzled appearance. Might not the frizzled appearance, the entire failure of moisture, and the excessive heat of the climate which occasioned it, have been the chief cause of that frizzling? My blood was become extremely dry, and my complexion differed but little from that of a Hindoo or an Arab." Voyages autour du Monde, tom. i. p. 307. Paris, 1782.

[3] *Black* is not the colour of the negro when first born. It is a remarkable fact that the negro infant comes into the world WHITE, only with a yellowish tinge, and that it becomes progressively darker, until the tenth day, when it is perfectly black. Caillié, Voyage à Tembuctoo, tom. i. p. 65. Paris, 1830.

sive, as in Guinea and Senegal, the people are perfectly black; where less excessive, as in Abyssinia, the people are less black; where it is more temperate, as in Barbary and Arabia, they are brown; and where mild, as in Europe and in Lesser Asia, they are fair." In further corroboration of the influence of climate on the human complexion, we may remark, that there is a colony of Jews, who have been settled at Cochin on the Malabar coast from a very remote period, of which they have lost the memory. Though originally a fair people from Palestine, and from their customs preserving themselves unmixed, they are now become as black as the other Malabarians, who are scarcely a shade lighter than the negroes of Guinea, Benin, or Angola. At Ceylon, also, the Portuguese, who settled there only a few centuries ago, are become *blacker* than the natives: and the Portuguese, who settled near the Mandingoes, about three hundred years since, differ so little from them as to be called *negroes*, which they resent as a high indignity.

In short, to adopt the memorable conclusion of the indefatigable philosopher above cited (who deduced it after a minute inquiry from a great number of the best attested observations): — "From every circumstance proof may be obtained, that mankind are *not* composed of species essentially different from each other; that, on the contrary, there was originally but one individual species of men, which, after being multiplied and diffused over the whole surface of the earth, underwent various changes, from the influence of climate, from the difference of food and the mode of living, from epidemical disorders, as also from the intermixture, varied *ad infinitum*, of individuals more or less resembling each other; that these alterations were at first less considerable, and confined to individuals; that afterwards, from the continued action of the above causes becoming more general, more sensible, and more fixed, they formed varieties of the species; and that these varieties have been and still are perpetuated from generation to generation, in the same manner as certain disorders and certain maladies pass from parents to their children."[1] Among all the diversified tribes who are endowed with reason and speech, "we contemplate the same internal feelings, appetencies, aversions; the same inward convictions, the same sentiments of subjection to invisible powers, and more or less fully developed — of unaccountableness or responsibility to unseen avengers of wrong and agents of retributive justice, from whose tribunal men cannot even by death escape. We find everywhere the same susceptibility, though not always in the same degree of forwardness or ripeness or of improvement, of admitting the cultivation of these universal endowments, of opening the eyes of the mind to the more clear and luminous views which Christianity unfolds, of becoming moulded to the institutions of religion and civilised life: in a word the same inward mental nature is to be recognised in all the races of men. When we compare this fact with the observations, which have heretofore been fully established, as to the specific instincts and separate physical endowments of all the distinct tribes of sentient beings in the universe, we are entitled to draw confidently the conclusion, that all human races are of one species and one family."[2] To this conclusion drawn from physiology we may add the corroborative facts, that philology shows, that "there is a remarkable affinity between the words of different languages; thus indicating that all language was originally one:" and that "it has been shown by traditions which universally prevail, that there is an identity in the belief of all nations in events, which happened to their ancestors in the earlier periods of the world's history; such, for instance, as the deluge and the offering of sacrifices to propitiate the Deity; while such traditional agreements are utterly irreconcilable with the doctrine of the diversity of origins."[3]

5. The peopling of America and of several islands, in which mischievous terrestrial animals are found, has also been urged as an ob-

[1] Buffon's Nat. Hist. vol. i. p. 291.

[2] Dr. Pritchard's Natural History of Man, pp. 545, 546. second edition; which treatise contains a very full discussion of the unity of the human race. But the most comprehensive work on this important subject is Dr. Smyth's Unity of the Human Races proved to be the Doctrine of Scripture, Reason, and Science. (Edinburgh, 1851.)

[3] Gamble's Paul the Apostle, p. 105.

jection against the universality of the deluge, and consequently against the credibility of the Mosaic history.

Answer. — Modern geographical discoveries have removed the weight of this objection. The straits which divide North America from Tartary, are so narrow as to admit a very easy passage from one continent to the other; and it is not impossible that they might even have been united by an isthmus, which the combined influence of time and the waves has demolished. The resemblance found between the inhabitants of the opposite sides of that passage and their uncivilised state and rude ignorance of the arts, prove them to have had one common origin.[1] So fully convinced was M. Buffon of this fact, long before the last and most important discoveries on the subject[2], that he declares he has "no doubt, independently of every theological consideration, that the origin of the Americans is the same with our own."[3]

The parts of the new world which are disjoined from the others, and which have been represented by ignorance and infidelity as vast continents, are by the most recent and complete researches reduced to a few inconsiderable islands[4]; whose inhabitants were, in all probability, conveyed to their present settlements from islands[5] adjacent to the continent of Asia, from which continent all the inhabitants of the new world (excepting the Esquimeaux and a few other American tribes that are evidently descended from the Greenlanders) have migrated. Nor can it excite surprise, that we are unacquainted with the *circumstances* of their migration, when we consider that this event probably happened at no great distance from the time when our own ancestors set out from the same regions, to people the western world, by an opposite route.[6]

6. The declaration of Moses in Deut. i. 10. that God had multiplied the Israelites as the *stars of heaven for multitude*, has been ridiculed, because to the apprehension of the objector "the number of the stars is infinite."

Let us, however, consider this subject. How many in number are the stars which appear to the naked eye? For it is that which appears to the naked eye which is to govern us in replying to this objection; for *God brought Abraham forth abroad*, — that is, out of doors, *and bade him look towards heaven* (Gen. xv. 5.), not with a telescope, but with his naked eyes. Now, let the objector go forth into the open air, and look up in the brightest and most favourable night, and count the stars. Not more than 3010 stars can be seen by the naked eye in both the northern and southern hemispheres; but at the time alluded to, the Israelites, independently of women and children, were more than six hundred thousand. Suppose, however, we even allow, from the late discoveries made by Sir Wm. Herschel and others with

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[1] The Esquimeaux resemble their neighbours on the north-west extremity of Europe; and the same resemblance is also found to subsist between the inhabitants of the north-east of Asia, and both the Americans opposite to them, and all the other Americans, except those few tribes which, together with the Esquimeaux, appear to have descended from the Greenlanders. Robertson's History of America, vol. ii. pp. 45—49.

[2] Those of Captains Cook and King. The latter had an opportunity of seeing, *at the same moment*, the coasts of Asia and America. Cook and King's Voyages, vol. iii. p. 244.

[3] Buffon's Nat. Hist. vol. i. p. 229.

[4] New Holland, though very considerable in size, is not at all so in its population. It was, however, known in part before the other islands above referred to.

[5] The inhabitants of these islands are supposed to have been all derived from the Malays. See the Introduction to Cook and King's Voyages, vol. i. pp. lxxi.—lxxiii. 4to., and also pp. 116—202.

[6] Dr. Eveleigh's Bampton Lectures, p. 282. Respecting the peopling of North America, the reader may consult the researches of Dr. Robertson, in his History of America, vol. ii. pp. 25—49., and the Abbé Clavigero, in his History of Mexico, translated by Mr. Cullen, vol. ii. dissertation i. There are also some valuable hints on the origin of the North American Indians, in "A Discourse on the Religion of the Indian Tribes of North America, delivered before the New York Historical Society, by Samuel Farmar Jarvis, D.D." New York, 1820. 8vo.

telescopes, which have magnified between thirty-five and thirty-six thousand times, that there *may be* seventy-five millions of stars visible by the aid of such instruments, which is the highest calculation ever made; yet still the divine word stands literally true. Matthew says (i. 17.) that the generations from Abraham to Christ were forty-two. Now we find at the second census, that the fighting men among the Hebrews amounted to 600,000; and the Israelites, who have never ceased to be a distinct people, have so multiplied, that if the aggregate number of them who ever lived could be ascertained, it would be found far to exceed the number of all the fixed stars taken together.[1]

7. The speaking of Balaam's ass (Numb. xxii. 28.) has been a standing jest to infidels in almost every age.

If the ass had opened her own mouth and reproved the rash prophet, we might well be astonished. Maimonides and others have imagined that the matter was transacted in a vision. But it is evident, from the whole tenor of the narration, as well as from the declaration of an inspired writer (2 Pet. ii. 14—16.), that it is to be understood as a literal narrative of a real transaction. The ass, it has been observed, was enabled to utter such and such sounds, probably as parrots do, *without* understanding them; and, whatever may be said of the construction of the ass's mouth, and of the tongue and jaws being so formed as to be unfit for speaking, yet an adequate cause is assigned for this wonderful effect, for it is expressly said, that *the Lord opened the mouth of the ass.* The miracle was by no means needless or superfluous: it was very proper to convince Balaam that the mouth and tongue were under God's direction, and that the same divine power which caused the dumb ass to speak contrary to its nature, could make him, in like manner, utter blessings contrary to his inclination. The fact is as consonant to reason as any other extraordinary operation; for all miracles are alike, and equally demand our assent, if properly attested. The giving of articulation to a brute is no more to the Deity than the making of the blind to see or the deaf to hear. And the reputed baseness of the instrument of which God was pleased to make use, amounts merely to this, that (as the apostle observes on another occasion) *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.* (1 Cor. i. 27.) There was, therefore, a fitness in the instrument used; for the more vile the means were, the fitter they were to confound the unrighteous prophet.

8. It has been affirmed that the circumstance of the sun and moon standing still, which is recorded in Joshua x. 12., is contrary to philosophy.[2]

"It is pitiful to say that the sun could not stand still because it does not move; for the history speaks according to the ideas of the age, and was intended to record simply the appearance to the eye, to which the language of men, whether philosophers or peasants, is still conformed in common conversation. Whether the effect was produced by a supernatural refraction, or whether the motion of the earth around its axis was suspended, we do not possess the means of determining."[3] In either case there was a miracle; and as a miracle the sacred historian expressly relates this event. It is, therefore, impossible to account for it on philosophical principles.

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[1] Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary, on Deut. i. 10.

[2] An ingenious French philosopher, who has consecrated his geological researches to the elucidation and defence of the sacred volume, has endeavoured to show that the double day in Palestine, caused by the miracle related in Josh. x., must have produced a double night in Europe. He considers that the double night, so frequently mentioned by the Latin poets, and connected with the birth of Hercules, was identical with this miracle, which is thus collaterally confirmed by the testimony of ancient profane writers. Chaubard, Elémens de Géologie, pp. 321—327. Paris, 1833. 8vo.

[3] Dr. Dick's Lectures on Theology, vol. i. p. 178. The reader, who is desirous of reading the different opinions of learned men, on the subject of this miracle, is referred to Mr. Hewlett's note on Josh. x. 12. (Comment. on the Bible, vol. i.), and to an original and elaborate note of Dr. A. Clarke on the same passage.

The object of this miracle was of the most important and impressive nature. The sun and the moon, the two principal gods of the idolatrous heathen nations, were commanded to yield miraculous obedience to the chief servant of the true God: and thereby contribute to the more effectual conquest of their own worshippers. With respect to the objections to the probability of this miracle, which originate in a consideration of its supposed consequences, it is justly observed by Bishop Watson, that the "machine of the universe is in the hand of God: he can stop the motion of any part, or of the whole, with less trouble than either of us can stop a watch!" How absurd, then, are the reasonings of those men who believe in the existence of an omnipotent God, yet deny the possibility of the exertion of his power in other ways than those which are known to their limited experience![1]

9. The beautiful poetical passage in Judges v. 20. has been stigmatised as a "species of Jewish rant and hyperbole."

A tempest meeting the enemy in the face discomfited them; and the torrent Kishon was so suddenly swelled by the rain (which common opinion ascribed to the planets) as to sweep away the greater part of Sisera's army in its precipitate flight. Hence the poetess calls it the *first* or the *prince* of torrents. The whole is exceedingly poetical, notwithstanding the censure of the opposers of revelation, whose cavils are characterised not more by want of taste than by wilful ignorance and malignity of disposition.

10. The number of cattle sacrificed at the dedication of Solomon's temple, has been objected to as incredible, viz. one hundred and twenty thousand sheep, and two and twenty thousand oxen. (1 Kings viii. 63.)

To this it may be replied, first, that all these were not offered in one day, much less on one altar. This solemn meeting continued fourteen days, viz. seven at the feast of tabernacles, and seven at the feast of dedication (1 Kings viii. 65.); and because the brazen altar was too little to receive the burnt-offerings, Solomon, by special permission from God, *hallowed the middle of the court*, that is, ordered other altars to be erected in the court of the priests, and perhaps in other places, which were to serve *only* during that solemnity, when such a vast number of sacrifices was to be offered. And, secondly, it is by no means improbable that there were some neighbouring princes, who paid Solomon their tribute in cattle, and who might supply victims for the extraordinary sacrifice above referred to. See an instance of this kind in 2 Kings iii. 4.

The great number of beasts daily required in Solomon's kitchen (1 Kings iv. 23.), will by no means be found incredible, when we compare it with the accounts of the daily consumption of oriental courts in modern times, and the prodigious number of servants of an Asiatic prince. Thus, Tavernier, in his description of the seraglio, said, that five hundred sheep and lambs were daily required for the persons belonging to the court of the sultan.[2]

11. It is urged that the treasures, mentioned in 1 Chron. xxix. 4—7. as amassed by David for the purpose of erecting a temple, are incredible; and that it was impossible that he could collect such a sum, which has been computed by M. le Clerc at eight hundred millions sterling, and which is thought to exceed all the gold of all the princes now upon earth put together.

But it is possible that there may be a corruption in the numbers; we are not so well acquainted with the weights mentioned, as to be able to ascertain with precision the then comparative value of the precious metals, nor what resources for

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[1] Townsend's Arrangements of the Old Testament, vol. i. p. 463. note.
[2] Burder's Oriental Literature, vol. i. p. 399.

obtaining them (now lost) there were at that time. Besides, it is probable that the talent, mentioned in the passage above cited, was the Syriac talent; according to which the amount collected by David would be 7,087,791*l.*[1] And in an age like that in which David lived, when kings and princes were accustomed to hoard up vast quantities of gold and silver (as oriental monarchs still do) it is by no means improbable that David and his princes, in their successful wars with the Philistines, Moabites, and Amalekites, and with the kings of Zobah, Syria, and Edom, might collect gold and silver to the above amount.

12. The circumstance of Elijah being fed by ravens (1 Kings xvii. 4.) has excited the profane scoffs of unbelievers, as an incredible thing; and they have attempted to be witty in their inquiries whence these unclean birds could have procured food for the prophet.

It has been attempted to get rid of this miracle, by asserting that the prophet was not fed by ravens, but by the Orbim or inhabitants of Orbo, a small town in the vicinity of Bethshan. But the following arguments will show that the received interpretation is correct: — It is expressly said that Elijah *drank of the brook* Cherith. (1 Kings xvii. 6.) "Had strangers brought him food, they might as well have furnished him with water; and thus it would not have been necessary for him to have removed when the brook was dried up. Again, Ahab (who had sent messengers in pursuit of the prophet among the neighbouring kingdoms and nations) took an oath of them that they were ignorant of the place of his concealment (1 Kings xviii. 10.); and some one out of a tribe, we may suppose it probable, would have delivered him up, seeing that they could gain nothing by his concealment, and had every thing to fear from detection. If we come to verbal criticism, we find that the word is precisely the same with that, which is most properly rendered 'raven' in Gen. viii. 7. when Noah sends a bird out of the ark."[2] The Almighty, doubtless, could have caused food to have been conveyed to Elijah in any other way, but he chose to send it by these rapacious birds for the greater illustration of his absolute command over all creatures, and also to give us full evidence that he is able to succour and preserve, by the most improbable means, all those who put their trust in him. We need go no further to inquire whence the ravens had this food; it is enough if we believe that they brought it to Elijah; for then we must allow, that they acted by divine direction, and that the food was of God's providing.

13. There is no contradiction between Job xxvi. 7. and Psal. xxiv. 2. and civ. 5.

In the first-cited passage, Job says that God *hangeth the earth upon nothing;* and in Psal. xxiv. 2. it is said that Jehovah *hath founded the earth upon the seas, and established it upon the floods;* and in Psal. civ. 5. that he hath *laid the foundations of the earth that it should not be removed for ever.* All which expressions are philosophically correct; for the foundation of a pendulous globe can be nothing but its centre, upon which all the parts lean and are supported by it; and the waters continually flowing through the bowels and concavities of the earth, from the depths of the sea, by a constant course and circulation, constitute an abyss in the lowermost parts of the earth. *All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.* (Eccles. i. 7.) So that, with great propriety of speech, the terraqueous globe is said to hang upon nothing, and the earth to be founded upon the seas, and established upon the floods, and (Psal. cxxxvi. 6.) to *be stretched out above the waters.*[3]

14. The *unicorn* ראים (REIM), described in Job xxxix. 9. and alluded

[1] The reader will find some elaborate and interesting calculations on the subject, in Dr. Brown's Antiquities of the Jews, vol. i. pp. 149—153.

[2] Myers's Hulsean Essay on the Futility of Attempts to represent the Miracles recorded in Scripture as Effects produced in the ordinary Course of Nature, p. 93. Cambridge, 1831. 8vo.

[3] Jenkin's Reasonableness of the Christian Religion, vol. ii. p. 236.

to in several other passages of Scripture, is the common rhinoceros, which is known, in Arabia, by the name of *reim* unto this day.

15. The circumstance of Jonah being in the belly of a *whale* (Jonah i. 17.; Matt. xii. 40.) has been affirmed to be contrary to matter of fact; as the throat of a whale, it is well known, is capable of admitting little more than the arm of an ordinary man; and these fish are never found in the Mediterranean Sea.

But Bochart has long since proved that a great fish of the *shark* kind is here intended. It is a well attested fact that many of the shark species are not only of such a size and form as to be able, without any miracle, to swallow a man whole, but also that men have been found entire in their stomachs; and, since it is a fact well known to physiologists, that the stomach has no power over substances endued with vitality, this circumstance will account in part for the miraculous preservation of the prophet Jonah in the belly or stomach of the great fish, in which he was for three days and three nights. Bochart is further of opinion, that the particular species of shark which swallowed the prophet Jonah was the *squalus carcharias* or white shark, for its voracity termed *lamia* by some naturalists, and which is a native of the seas in hot climates, where it is the terror of navigators.[1] Mr. Rae Wilson the day after a violent storm, exactly in the same portion of the sea where the ship with Jonah on board encountered the tempest, observed several very "great fishes" sporting about the ship, some of which could not be less than sixty feet in length, and appeared as long as the vessel itself on board of which he was embarked.[2]

The preceding are the passages of Scripture, which have been principally excepted against, as being contrary to philosophy and the nature of things; and yet, when all the circumstances of them are properly considered, there is nothing in them which may not be accounted for, and interpreted, on the principles of modern philosophy.

[1] Bocharti Opera, tom. iii. col. 742. *et seq.* Bochart's opinion has been adopted by Mr. Parkhurst (Greek Lexicon, article Κητος), and is now generally received. See also Scripture illustrated by Natural History, &c. Expository Index, p. 52. and the Fragments annexed to the quarto edition of Calmet's Dictionary, No. cxlv. p. 103. Bishop Jebb, however, has urged several considerations (which are too long for insertion here, and the force of which it would impair to abridge), to show that it probably was a whale, into the cavity of whose mouth Jonah was taken. (Sacred Literature, pp. 178—180.) The observations which he has adduced from the natural history of the whale are confirmed by the enterprising and experienced whale-fisher, Captain Scoresby; who states, that when the mouth of the *Balæna Mysticetus*, or Great Common Whale, is open, "it presents a cavity as large as a room, and capable of containing a merchant ship's jolly-boat full of men, being six or eight feet wide, ten or twelve feet high (in front), and fifteen or sixteen feet long." (Scoresby's Account of the Arctic Regions, vol. i. p. 455.) The only objection that can be offered to Dr. Jebb's opinion is, that there is no authentic instance on record of whales being found in the Mediterranean Sea.

[2] Travels in the Holy Land, &c. third edition, vol. i. pp. 14, 15. London, 1831.

No. IX.

ON THE CONTRADICTIONS TO MORALITY, FALSELY ALLEGED TO EXIST IN THE SCRIPTURES.

[*Referred to in pages* 399. *and* 404. *suprà.*]

NOTWITHSTANDING it is generally admitted that the Holy Scriptures breathe a spirit of the purest and most diffusively benevolent morality; yet there are some passages which have been represented as giving countenance to immorality and cruelty. But these, when duly examined, will be found perfectly in unison with the purest principles of morality. The wide difference which subsists between ancient and modern manners, if fairly considered, would alone be a sufficient reply to the indecencies, which are asserted to exist in the Bible.

Further, the characters and conduct of men, whom we find in all other respects commended in the Scriptures, are in some respects faulty; but these are, in such instances, by no means proposed for our imitation, and, consequently, give no sanction whatever to immorality: for several of these faults are either expressly condemned, or are briefly related or mentioned as matter of fact, without any intimation that they are either to be commended or imitated. The sacred writers, however, are only answerable for facts, not for the morality of actions. It is true that the Jewish history is stained with blood and cruelty; but so is the history of all other nations, (whose chroniclers, annalists, or other historians are not censured for their bare narration of the crimes of the individuals or nations,) and without the additional circumstance of being relieved by such histories of true piety and virtue as abound in the Scriptures. But it is worthy of remark, that the moral character of the Jewish nation was by no means so uniformly bad as the modern antagonists of divine revelation have pretended. In some ages their morals were much purer, and their piety more fervent, than at others. Such was the generation which first entered Canaan with Joshua, and such also the generations that lived during the reigns of their most pious monarchs. It is, moreover, to be considered, that the *mere* narration of any action, such as we find in the Old and New Testaments, implies neither the approbation nor the censure of it, but only declares that such a thing was done, and in such a manner; and the not concealing of these actions shows the simplicity and impartiality of the sacred writers, who spare no person whomsoever, not even when they themselves are concerned, — though the thing related should redound to their disgrace; — as in the case of Noah's drunkenness (Gen. ix. 21.); Jacob's deceiving of Isaac

(Gen. xxvii.[1]); Peter's denial of Christ (Matt. xxvi. 69—75. and the parallel passages of the other evangelists); Paul's dispute with Peter (Gal. ii. 11—14.); and Paul's excuse of himself (Acts xxiii. 5.).

The following are the principal passages which have been charged with being contradictions to morality; but with how little pretext, the reader will be enabled to judge, by the candid examination and consideration of the remainder of this section.

1. *God's command to Abraham, to sacrifice Isaac* (Gen. xxii.) *has been represented as a command to commit murder in its most horrid form, and, consequently, as inconsistent with the holiness of God to give.*

But this command may be satisfactorily vindicated, either by regarding it as a symbolical action[2], or (without this consideration) by resolving it into the divine sovereignty over the lives of his creatures. For, the Supreme Lord and Giver of Life has a right to take it away, and to command it to be taken away, whenever and in whatsoever manner he pleases. To offer a human victim to him, without his express warrant, would be to commit murder; but to do so by his command would be an act of obedience. As the Almighty has a right to command, so his perfections lead us to infer, that he will command nothing but what is worthy of himself. The design of God, however, was to *prove* Abraham, in order that his faith, love, and obedience might be manifest, and NOT, in fact, that he should offer up Isaac.

2. *Jacob's vow* (Gen. xxviii. 20—22.) *is asserted to be quite conditional, and as implying that if his God would clothe and feed him, he would serve him.*

This representation is not more unjust, than the manner in which it is stated is indecent. In order that this matter may be regarded in its proper light, it must be considered, that, immediately before the account which is given us of Jacob's vow, we are informed of a vision which he had when setting out on his journey to Padan-

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[1] From this circumstance God has been represented by infidels, as distinguishing his favourite Jacob, by a system of *fraud and lies*; but the following considerations, by Bishop Horne, may assist us to form a right judgment of this matter.

"1st. The proposition of deceiving Isaac originated not with Jacob, but with Rebecca. Jacob remonstrated against it, as likely to bring a curse upon him, rather than a blessing; nor would he consent to perform his part, till she engaged to take all the blame on herself —'On me be thy curse, my son; only obey my voice.'

"2dly. From this speech, and from the earnestness and solicitude discovered by Rebecca, it may not unfairly be presumed, that she had some special reason for what she did; that Isaac was about to take a wrong step in a concern of great moment, which ought to be prevented, and could be prevented by no other means.

"3dly. The rectitude of Rebecca's judgment seems evidently to have been recognised and allowed by Isaac, at the conclusion of the matter. For though he had blessed Jacob, intending to bless Esau, yet, as if recollecting himself, he confirmed and ratified that blessing in the strongest terms: 'Yea, and he shall be blessed.' Still farther — at sending him away, he again repeated the benediction, in the most solemn and affecting manner: 'God give thee the blessing of Abraham!' It is hard to assign any other reason, why, if so disposed, upon discovering the fraud, he might not have reversed the proceeding. Nay, by the kind meeting of the brothers afterwards, one should be inclined to suppose, that Esau himself acquiesced at length in the propriety of what had been done.

"4thly. If such were the case, Isaac was only deceived into what was right, and what himself acknowledged to be so in the conclusion. The deception was like those often practised by physicians for the benefit of their patients; and casuists must decide upon it in the same manner. The offence of Jacob is certainly alleviated, if not entirely taken off, by the circumstance of Rebecca pledging herself to bear the blame; as the conduct of Rebecca seems justified by that of Isaac ratifying and confirming to Jacob the blessing originally intended for Esau. Upon the whole, if there were any offence, it was one that might be forgiven; and if God, notwithstanding, continued to bless Jacob, he did forgive it, and had reasons for so doing." Bp. Horne's Works, vol. vi. pp. 477, 478.

[2] This is Bp. Warburton's mode of solving the difficulty.

Aram, when God renewed to him the promises made to Abraham concerning the giving of the land of Canaan to his posterity, and that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed: at the same time assuring him, that he would be with him in all places whither he should go, and would bring him again into that land. (12—15.) In consequence of this vision, Jacob made his vow the next morning; the design of which was, to express the sense he had of the divine goodness, and his confidence in God's gracious protection, and to declare his solemn resolution, that if God would be with him and keep him in his way, and would give him *bread to eat* and *raiment to put on* (which shows the moderation of his desires), so that he should come again to his father's house in peace, he would after his return make an open and public acknowledgment of his gratitude and devotion to the Lord as his God; would set apart that place, where God had appeared to him, to his worship; and would devote to His service the tenth of all the substance which God should give him. Now such a conduct as this, instead of being impiously interested and craving (as some opposers of revelation have asserted), will appear to every one who judges candidly and impartially, a great argument of the simplicity and goodness of Jacob's heart, and of a pious and well-disposed mind: though undoubtedly it appears absurd to those who affirm — what however they cannot prove — that the Almighty does not concern himself with individuals of the human race.

3. *The objection, that God's commanding of the Israelites* (Exod. iii. 22., xii. 35.) *to borrow from the Egyptians what they never intended to restore, is not only an act of injustice, but favours theft,* is obviated by rendering the Hebrew verb שָׁאַל (SHAaL), *asked* or *demanded,* agreeably to its proper and literal meaning[1], which is given to it in all the ancient versions, as well as in every modern translation, *our own excepted.*

4. *The hardening of Pharaoh's heart* (Exod. iv. 21., ix. 16.) *has been a fruitful source of malignant cavil with the adversaries of the Bible; some of whom have not hesitated to affirm that this single chapter is sufficient to destroy the authenticity of the entire Scriptures, while others, more decently and speciously, assert that a just God could not punish the Egyptian monarch for a hardness of heart of which he himself was evidently the cause.* This is the objection in all its force. Let us now see how little foundation there is for it.

"When we meet with an assertion apparently contrary to all the truth and equity in the world, it is but common justice to any writer, human or divine, to suppose that we mistake his meaning, and that the expression employed to convey it is capable of an interpretation different from that which may at first present itself. We cannot, for a moment, imagine that God secretly influences a man's will, or suggests any wicked stubborn resolution to his mind, and then punishes him for it. We are therefore to consider, by what other means, not incompatible with his nature and attributes, he may be said, in a certain sense, and without impropriety, to harden a man's heart. There are many ways by which we may conceive this effect to be wrought, without running into the absurdity and impiety above mentioned. The heart may be hardened by those very respites, miracles, and mercies, intended to soften it; for if they do not soften it they will harden it.—God is sometimes said to do that which he permits to be done by others, in the way of judgment and punishment: as when his people rejected his own righteous laws, he is said to have 'given them' the idolatrous ones of their heathen neighbours, 'statutes that were not good.'—The heart may be hardened by his withdrawing that grace it has long resisted; men may be given up to a reprobate mind; as they *would* not see when they

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[1] It is the very word used in Psal. ii. 8. שְׁאַל, (SHAaL). ASK *of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* The verb is rendered *demandera,* shall demand, by Rabbi Cahen. La Bible . . . . . . avec l'Hebreu en régard, tom. ii. p. 13.

possessed the faculty of sight, the use of that faculty may be taken from them, and they may be abandoned to blindness. But all this is judicial, and supposes previous voluntary wickedness, which it is designed to punish."[1]

Further, no person who candidly peruses the history of the transactions with Pharaoh, can deny that what the Almighty did to Pharaoh and the Egyptians had a tendency to soften rather than to harden his heart; especially as it was not until after he had seen the miracles, and after the plagues had ceased, that *he hardened himself* and would not suffer the Israelites to depart. The threatened plagues were suspended on a condition with which he refused to comply, and then only were they inflicted. It is, moreover, well known that Hebrew verbs in the Hiphil conjugation signify to *permit* or to *suffer* to be done, as well as to *cause* to be done: hence nothing more is meant, than to leave a man to the bent and tendency of his own disposition. Thus Pharaoh was left, and he is said to have made his own heart stubborn against God. He *sinned yet more and hardened* HIS *heart.* The proper rendering, therefore, of Exod. iv. 21. is — *I will permit his heart to be so hardened that he will not let the people go.* So in Exod. ix. 12. it ought to be translated, *Yet the* LORD *suffered the heart of Pharaoh to be so hardened that he hearkened not to them.* And a more literal rendering of Exod. ix. 15, 16. would remove the discrepancy which seems at present to exist in our common version, which runs thus: — *For now I will stretch out my hand and smite thee with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this* cause *have I raised thee up, for to show* in *thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.* In the original Hebrew, the verbs are in the *past* tense and not in the *future*, as our authorised version improperly expresses them, by which means an apparent contradiction is produced; for neither Pharaoh nor his people were *smitten with pestilence*, nor was he by any kind of mortality *cut off from the earth.* The first-born, it is true, were slain by a destroying angel, and Pharaoh himself was drowned in the Red Sea: but there is no reference whatever to these judgments in the two verses in question. If the words be translated as they ought, in the subjunctive mood, or in the past instead of the *future*, this seeming contradiction to facts, as well as all ambiguity, will be avoided: "*For if now* I HAD STRETCHED OUT (literally *had sent forth*) *my hand, and had smitten thee and thy people with the pestilence, thou* SHOULDEST HAVE BEEN *cut off from the earth. But truly on this very account have I caused thee to* SUBSIST, *that I might cause thee to see my power: and that my* NAME *might be declared throughout all the earth*, or *in all this land.*"[2]

Thus God gave this impious king to know that it was in consequence of his especial providence, that both he and his people had not been already destroyed by means of the *past* plagues: but that God had preserved him for this very purpose, that he might have a further opportunity of showing Pharaoh His power in the remaining plagues, and of manifesting that He, Jehovah, was the only true God, for the full conviction of the Hebrews and Egyptians.[3]

Lastly, our authorised translation of Exod. vii. 13. (*and he* [that is, God] *hardened Pharaoh's heart*) is incorrect. It ought to have been, AND THE HEART OF PHARAOH WAS HARDENED, as the original is rendered by all the ancient versions, without exception, and by the most judicious modern translations. The same phrase is correctly translated in our authorised version, in Exod. vii. 22., viii. 19., and ix. 7.

The objections, therefore, which the opponents of the Bible have raised against it from the passages we have been considering, are thus proved to be utterly destitute of foundation.

[1] Bp. Horne's Letters on Infidelity, Lett. xiv. (Works, vol. vi. p. 481.)

[2] Ainsworth, Houbigant, Dathe, Schott and Winzer on Exod. ix. 15, 16. Cahen translates them in the past tense:—"Mais c'est pour cela, que je t'ai conservé pour te montre ma puissance, et afin qu'on cite mon nom sur toute la terre; si tu t'élèves encore contre mon peuple pour ne pas le renvoyer." Bible, tom. ii. p. 15. It is worthy of remark that the Septuagint Greek version of the Pentateuch renders these two verses subjunctively. The case of Pharaoh is fully considered by Mr. Twopenny in his "Dissertations on some Parts of the Old and New Testaments," &c. Diss. iv. pp. 38—54.; and in Dr. Graves's Discourses on Calvinistic Predestination, pp. 295—304.

[3] Dr. A. Clarke on Exod. ix. 15.

5. *Again, visiting the sins of the fathers upon their children* (Exod. xx. 5.) *has been charged as injustice.*

But this objection disappears, the moment we are convinced that the reward and punishment here intended, are confined to the outward circumstances of prosperity and distress in the *present* life; because if (as was the case) such a sanction were necessary in the particular system by which God thought fit to govern the Jewish people, it is evident, that any inequality as to individuals, would be certainly and easily remedied in a future life (as in the particular instances recorded in Numb. xvi. 27—33. and Josh. vii. 24, 25.); so that each should receive his final reward exactly according to his true appearance in the sight of God, and thus "the Judge of all the earth do right." It is only when children copy and improve on the crimes of their wicked parents, that they draw down upon their heads redoubled vengeance; so that the innocent *never* suffer for the guilty, except in such temporal calamities as necessarily result from their parents' crimes. As, when the profligacy of one generation involves the next in poverty, or the like. On the contrary, so benevolent is the God of Israel, that the eminent piety of one man is sometimes rewarded with blessings on thousands of his descendants. This was the case with Abraham and his descendants. Yet this is the God whom deists represent as cruel and vindictive.[1]

6. The extirpation of the Canaanites by the Jews, according to the divine command, is urged as an act of the greatest cruelty and injustice; but this objection falls to the ground when it is considered, that

The wickedness of the Canaanites "was so great as to deserve such exemplary punishment from God as might prove a warning to other nations. He might as justly destroy them by the sword of the Israelites as by famine, pestilence, or any other judgment. He gave full proof by miracles that he had commissioned the Israelites for this very purpose; and their being thus commissioned had the strongest tendency to impress them with an abhorrence of idolatry."[2]

7. *The narrative of the death of the rebels, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and their associates, contained in* Numb. xvi. 23—35. *has met with peculiar treatment from some German critics.*

One class has suggested that Moses probably caused the tents of the rebels to be *undermined;* and as he knew at what hour of the day the mine would be sprung, so he could predict when the rebels would be swallowed up in the earth! Eichhorn is somewhat more expert in his explanation. He attempts to show that Moses ordered the rebels to be *buried alive*, with all that appertained to them. As to the two hundred and fifty men consumed by fire, he thinks that they were first slain, and then their bodies consumed by fire; and this by the orders of Moses.

To argue against conjectures of such a nature would indeed be labour in vain. It is not possible for any one who reads the narration of Moses really to suppose that the writer did not regard the event in question as miraculous. Now the object of an interpreter is to explain the meaning of the author whom he undertakes to interpret. The question — whether such an event as is related in Numb. xvi. 23—35. is possible or credible? — may be raised by critics or sceptics, and may be answered by them in the negative; but those who believe that the Creator of the world has it at all times under his control, and that the authors of the sacred volume are worthy

[1] Dr. Graves's Lectures on the Pentateuch, Part iii. Lect. 3. Sect. 2. (Works, vol. ii. pp. 280—285.) See also Michaelis's Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, vol. i. pp. 45—47. Age of Infidelity, in answer to the Age of Reason, p. 52.

[2] Gerard's Institutes of Biblical Criticism, p. 445. The extirpation of the Canaanites is considered in the Age of Infidelity, in answer to the Age of Reason, pp. 26—31.; also by Lord A. Hervey in his Sermons on the Inspiration of the Holy Scripture, pp. 67, 68. (Cambridge, 1856); and most fully by Dr. Graves in his Lectures on the Four last Books of the Pentateuch, Part iii. Lect. 1. (Works, vol. ii. pp. 204—225.)

of full credit, will not be anxious to explain away the obvious meaning of the Scriptures, nor to free themselves from the obligation to believe in occurrences of a supernatural kind. To wonder or to scoff at this (so named) *credulity*, is not difficult; but to argue it down with grounds of reasoning that will abide the test of careful, extensive, and sober investigation, is quite a different task.[1]

8. *The severity of Moses in ordering the extermination of the Midianites* (Numb. xxxi.) *can only be justified by the command. This the history asserts: but that assertion* (it has been insisted) *is contradicted by the nature of the case, because it is abhorrent from the Deity to require the destruction of his creatures, and more especially to require them to destroy one another.*

This is the objection in all its strength; only in this instance there is supposed to be equal cruelty in sparing as in destroying, because, while all the males were destroyed (children as well as adults), the female children and virgins were all to be spared, as it has been said, for prostitution. For the latter assertion, however, there is no foundation either in fact or in probability. It only proves that the objectors find it necessary to exaggerate in order to produce the desired effect upon their readers; for the books of Moses nowhere allow the Israelites to debauch their female slaves. His law prohibited an Israelite even from marrying a captive without delays and previous formalities; and if he afterwards divorced her, he was bound to set her at liberty "because he had humbled her." (Deut. xxi. 10—14.) They were, then, simply allowed to retain these captives as slaves, educating them in their families, and employing them as domestics. The destruction of the other Midianitish women, who were either married or debauched, is accounted for, by recollecting that they had enticed the Israelites to sin. It is a fact too well known to require additional proof in this place, that in the early heathen nations, numbers of lewd women were consecrated to fornication and idolatry, vestiges of which are still to be found among the dancing girls of Egypt and of India. Such, probably, were many of these women, and such, therefore, was their punishment. As to the males, they were appointed to destruction, that the nation might be extirpated, which was impossible while any of the male issue were preserved. "While," however, "the Mosaic Code presents enactments of great severity, it must be remembered that it was drawn for a people on the verge of civilisation; and, withal, has furnished to the world some of the best and most enduring principles of wise government."[2]

9. *It is asserted that some of the Levitical laws have a manifest tendency to corrupt and defile the imagination; and the regulations in* Deut. xxii. 13—21. *have been particularly urged as an instance of this sort.*

With regard to these regulations, and others of a similar kind, we may remark that what they require might be needful in the then situation of the Israelites, and yet it is not necessary that *we* should now curiously or impertinently scrutinise them. The people of Israel were disposed to be jealous of their wives, and to defame them without any just cause, that they might have an excuse for putting them away, which would tend to produce many public mischiefs and disorders. In this case, therefore, it was a wise and merciful institution, to provide a remedy by such sort of injunctions by which the innocent might be vindicated. Such signs of trial might never fail in that climate, though they might in some others. So far indeed was it from being unworthy of God to leave such things upon record, that it may heighten our admiration both of his great wisdom and benignity in his management of that people, who were so extremely perverse, and so addicted to the extremes of lust and jealousy. If, therefore, the perusal of the passage in question excite improper thoughts in any one, the fault is in him, and not in the Scripture. Scarcely any thing can be mentioned, of which a bad use may not be

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[1] Stuart's Hebrew Chrestomathy, pp. 182, 183.

[2] Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, delivered at the University of Virginia, p. 385. (New York, 1852.)

made: things the most sacred and divine may in this respect be strangely abused. Nor is it a better argument that the Scriptures were not written by inspiration of God, that there are some parts and passages of it, which may be abused by persons who are lasciviously disposed, than it is that the sun was not created by the Almighty, because its light *may* be used by wicked men as an auxiliary in perpetrating the crimes which they have meditated.

10. *The Mosaic law* (Deut. xiii.) *which punished idolatry with death, has been represented as cruel and unjust, and giving countenance to persecution for religious opinions.*

But it is manifest to any one, who will peruse the chapter in question with attention, that this law commanded only such Israelites to be put to death, as apostatised to idolatry and still continued members of their own community. And as their government was a *theocracy* (in other words, God was the temporal king of Israel, and their kings were only his viceroys,) idolatry was, strictly, the political crime of *high treason*, which in every state is punishable with death. It is further to be observed, that the Israelites were never commissioned to make war upon their neighbours, or exercise any violence towards any of them, in order to *compel* them to worship the God of Israel, nor to force them to it even after they were conquered (Deut. xx. 10.); nor were they empowered thus forcibly to attempt to recover any native Israelite, who should revolt to idolatry, and go to settle in a heathen country.

11. *The law in* Deut. xxi. 18—21. *has been stigmatised as being both inhuman and brutal, but with as little justice as any other part of the Mosaic institutes.*

The passage in question is as follows: — "*If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, nor the voice of his mother, and* that *when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them; then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city and unto the gate of his place; and they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son* is *stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he* is *a glutton and a drunkard. And all the men of the city shall stone him with stones, that he die.*" On this clause, we are to take notice, in the first place, of the character of the culprit, it is a *son*, — not a daughter; — a *stubborn* and *rebellious* son, a *glutton* and a *drunkard;* — in a word, a most profligate and abandoned character. Secondly, his parents must reprove and correct him, *repeatedly*, and until there is *no* hope of amendment. Thirdly, the parents were the *only allowed prosecutors;* and it was required that they should *both* concur in bringing him to the magistrate, the power of life and death not being intrusted to the parents, as it afterwards was among the Greeks and Romans. Lastly, the magistrates were to investigate the case, which must be *fully proved*, so as to induce them to condemn the criminal, and order him to be put to death. Natural affection would almost always prevent the prosecution; the required proof would secure all, but the most atrociously criminal, from the hasty rage, or the deliberate malice of those few parents, who were capable of such desperate wickedness, as combining to murder their own children. We do not read of any instance, in the whole Jewish history, of this law having been carried into execution. If, however, such an extraordinary event at any time occurred, it could not fail to excite general notice, and to produce a deep and lasting impression on the minds of both parents and children. So that the solemn execution of one incorrigible criminal would be a most salutary warning to tens of thousands. The very existence of such a law would confirm greatly the authority of parents, and give energy to their admonitions; as well as fortify the minds of young persons against various temptations, and so *prevent* crimes. And it would constantly excite all parents, who attended to the law of Moses, to restrain, correct, and watch over their children, when young; to give them good instruction, set them a good example, and pray for them without ceasing; and to keep them as much as possible out of bad company, and from contracting bad habits.

This law, therefore, so harmless and beneficial in its operations, yet so contrary

to human policy, proves, instead of invalidating, the divine original of that code, in which alone it is found.[1]

12. *From the conduct of Ehud* (Judges iii. 15—26.), *of Jael* (iv. 17—20.), *and from David's advice to Solomon concerning Joab and Shimei* (1 Kings ii. 5, 6. 8.), *it has been asserted that the Scriptures inculcate assassination.*

Nothing can be more false than this assertion. For, in the first place, the cases of Ehud and Jael are simply recorded as matters of fact, without any comment or observation whatever; and, therefore, they neither can nor ought to be represented as encouraging assassination.[2] The approval of the conduct of Jael by the prophetess Deborah is restricted to the act of destroying a tyrant. "God may have commissioned each as his agent; and left them, as he does and often has done, to select their methods of service. Such examples are not propounded for imitation, unless we were placed in circumstances of similarly extraordinary character."[3] We must judge of the conduct of Jael by the feelings of those, among whom the right of avenging the blood of a relative was so strongly rooted, that even Moses could not take it away. Jael was an ally, by blood, of the Israelitish nation. Their chief oppressor, who had mightily oppressed them for the space of twenty years, now lay defenceless before her; and he was moreover one of those whom Israel was bound by divine command to extirpate. Perhaps, too, she felt herself called to be the instrument of God in working out for that nation a great deliverance, by thus exterminating their heathen oppressor. At least, Israel viewed it in this light; and in this view we cannot reproach the heroine with that as a crime, which both she and Israel felt to be a deed performed in accordance with the mandate of Heaven.[4]

The advice of David to Solomon, when on his death-bed, demands a more distinct consideration. And, in the first place, with regard to Joab, we remark that no attentive reader of the history of David, after his accession to the throne of Israel, can help observing how often it is noticed that the sons of Zeruiah were too strong for David; in other words, that they had too much power with the army for him to venture to punish their atrocious deeds; reasons of state deferred the punishment, and when those reasons were removed, it was proper to punish a deliberate murder according to an express law. David also knew that a man like Joab, who could brook no superior, might endanger the peace of the kingdom. He was now engaged to support Adonijah, and so far in actual rebellion. But it is to be observed that the Hebrew monarch does not advise Solomon to put Joab *absolutely* and *unconditionally* to death; he charges him to *do according to his wisdom*, and the sum of his advice is in effect this:—"Though you have now pardoned Joab through policy, as I was myself compelled to do by the exigency of the times, and the predominant influence of the sons of Zeruiah; yet, should he offend *again*, act according to discretion, and then punish him, as a hoary-headed and confirmed traitor, with death." Secondly, with respect to Shimei, David had fulfilled his promise. He had only engaged that he would not put him to death on the day when Abishai had requested permission to do it (compare 2 Sam. xix. 23. with 1 Kings ii. 8.); and he left it to Solomon to treat him as he thought just, in reference to his future conduct. David knew thas he was Shimei still, and would so act as to bring on himself due punishment. Solomon accordingly sent for Shimei, and commanded him to reside in Jerusalem, and not to depart thence, under pain of death on the day when he should pass over the brook Kidron, a condition to which Shimei thankfully acceded. (1 Kings ii. 37, 38.) Three years afterwards, the latter transgressed this convention, and went to Gath (verse 40.), a suspicious quarter, in con-

[1] Age of Infidelity, p. 24. Scott's Reply to Paine's Age of Reason, p. 18. London, 1820. 12mo.

[2] The cases of Ehud and of Jael are considered in Twopenny's Dissertations, pp. 133—140.; and in Lord A. Hervey's Sermons on the Inspiration of Holy Scripture, pp. 69—71.

[3] Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, delivered at the University of Virginia, p. 386.

[4] Prof. Robinson's Interpretation of Judges, chap. v., in the Biblical Repository, vol. ii p. 607. (Andover, 1831.)

sequence of which Solomon, after charging him with the violation of his oath, commanded him to be put to death. (41—46.)[1]

13. Again, *it has been asserted by some, that the law of Moses* (Levit. xxvii. 28.), *concerning devoted things to be put to death, authorised human sacrifices: and Jephthah's sacrificing his daughter* (Judg. xi. 34. &c.), *Samuel's hewing Agag in pieces before the Lord* (1 Sam. xv. 33.), *and David's delivering seven of Saul's posterity to the Gibeonites to be put to death by them* (2 Sam. xxi. 2, &c.), *have been represented as instances of human sacrifices according to that law.*

But as there are express prohibitions of sacrificing their children in Deut. xii. 30, 31.; Psal. cvi. 37, 38.; Jer. vii. 31.; and Ezek. xvi. 20, 21.; so there not only is no direction to sacrifice any other human creature, nor are there any rites appointed for such sacrifice, but also it would have rendered the priest unclean, by touching a dead body; and the sacrifice of a man is expressly declared to be abominable in Isa. lxvi. 3. As no devoted thing could be sacrificed at all, the law in question cannot possibly relate to sacrifice, and is capable of a very different meaning. For, although Josephus, and many commentators after him, are of opinion that Jephthah did really immolate his daughter, the probability is that she was not sacrificed. And this will appear from the rendering of the conversive particle ו (*vau*), which the preceding considerations require to be taken disjunctively, and translated OR instead of AND, both in Levit. xxvii. 28.[2] and also in Judges xi. 30, 31.[3] (as it is in the margin of our larger Bibles.) What further confirms this rendering, and consequently reconciles these two passages, is, that Jephthah's rashness had time to cool, as his daughter went two months to bewail her *virginity*, that is, her consecration to God, which obliged her to remain single, without posterity. It is further said, that she went to bewail her virginity, *not* her sacrifice. Besides the Israelitish women went four times in every year to mourn or talk WITH (not *for*) the daughter of Jephthah, to lament her seclusion from the world, and the hardship of her situation as cut off from every domestic enjoyment. Now, if in the course of two months no person could have suggested to Jephthah a ransom for his daughter, yet surely she must have been alive, though dead to him and his family (as his only child), and to the world by her seclusion, if the Israelitish women went to condole with her. It is further worthy of remark, that it is not afterwards said, that he actually sacrificed her, but that "*he did with her according to his vow.*" The sacred historian subjoins, *she knew no man:* if she were sacrificed, this remark is frivolous; but if she were devoted to perpetual virginity, this idea coincides with the visits of the Israelitish women. On the whole, we may safely conclude, that Jephthah's daughter was *not* sacrificed, but consecrated to a state of celibacy.[4]

With respect to the two other cases above mentioned, viz. the hewing of Agag in pieces before the Lord, and the delivery of seven of Saul's posterity to the Gibeonites, they have no reference whatever to sacrifices. Agag, in particular, was put to

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[1] See Dr. Chandler's Life of David, vol. ii. pp. 444—481., where that monarch's conduct towards Joab and Shimei is fully vindicated.

[2] That this passage should be so rendered, has been proved by Dr. Hales. It will then run thus: — *Notwithstanding, no devotement* [or devoted thing] *which a man shall devote unto* THE LORD, [either] *of man* or *of beast*, or *of land of his own property, shall be sold or redeemed. Every thing devoted is most holy unto the Lord.* New Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. pp. 289, 290. See the subject also treated, in an admirable manner, in Dr. Randolph's Sermon entitled Jephthah's Vow considered, in the second volume of his "View of our blessed Saviour's Ministry," &c. pp. 166—195.

[3] Which verses are to be translated thus: — "*And Jephthah vowed a vow unto* THE LORD, *and said, If thou wilt surely give the children of Ammon into my hand, then it shall be that whatsoever cometh out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall either be the Lord's*, OR *I will offer it up* [for] *a burnt-offering.*" New Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. p. 288.

[4] Hales, vol. ii. pp. 289—292. Calmet's Dictionary, vol. ii. pp. 158. &c. 4to. edit. Additions to Calmet. Waterland's Scripture vindicated, on Judg. ix. 13. (Works, vol. v. pp. 133—135.)

death as a *criminal*, and not as a sacrifice.[1] The "seven descendants of Saul, who were partly the children of a concubine and partly of a daughter of Saul, were not pretenders to the crown; and David cannot be suspected of having embraced such an opportunity to put them out of the way. Neither is it to be supposed that David delivered up the innocent to death contrary to the law (Deut. xxiv. 16.). They were therefore delivered up to the avengers of blood, and punished with death, not on account of the crimes of Saul, but for the murders which they themselves, with the connivance of Saul, had committed on the Gibeonites, and for which they had hitherto remained unpunished. They themselves constituted the bloody house, which was generally notorious as such. Saul is mentioned with them, merely because he took under his protection the murderers, who were so nearly related to him, and delivered them from the hands of the avengers of blood."[2]

14. In 1 Sam. xiii. 14. David is called the *man after God's own heart*. And this phrase, as applied to him, has been a fertile source of sarcasm and reproach to many infidel writers, as if the Scripture sanctioned adultery and murder.

But do they authorise those crimes? By no means. They are there reprehended, and the severest denunciations are pronounced against those who perpetrate them. In what sense then was he a *man after God's own heart*? Answer.—In comparison of his conduct with that of Saul; in his strict attention to the law and worship of God; in his recognising, throughout his whole conduct, that Jehovah was king in Israel, and that he himself was only his vicegerent; in never attempting to alter any of those laws, or in the least degree to change the Israelitish constitution. In all his *public official conduct* he acted according to the Divine Mind, and fulfilled the will of his Maker. But the phrase itself will, perhaps, be the best explained by the case of Samuel. Eli was rejected, and Samuel chosen in his place, just as David superseded Saul. On this occasion God said, *I will raise me up a faithful priest*, that *shall do according to* that *which is in my heart*. (1 Sam. ii. 35.) And is not he, who acts agreeably to the Divine Will, *a man after God's heart?* Further, it is worthy of remark, that this expression is never used in reference to his private or personal moral conduct. It is used wholly in reference to his uniform regard to the promotion of the interests of pure religion, notwithstanding all temptations to idolatry and persecution.[3] The numbering of the people (2 Sam. xxiv.), in order, as it would seem, to push conquests into foreign countries, and the flagitious adultery with Bathsheba, together with the consequent murder of Uriah (2 Sam. xi.), are the only instances in which David seems to have forgotten himself and his God. With regard to the two last shocking crimes, more particularly, so far was David from excusing them, that he confesses and laments them with the greatest horror. "But how earnest was his repentance! And with what submission to the will of God did he bear those calamities which were sent for his punishment, and which, as they were caused by his own children, must have been so much the more distressing to his paternal feelings! (2 Sam. xi.; Psal. li. 2; Sam. xii. 1—23., xiii. 1—20., xv.—xviii.) Do we not here again see the soul entirely and steadily devoted to God? David, indeed, was no ideal model of human perfection; he was not without the blemishes incident to human nature; but on the whole, he was an example worthy of the imitation of his successors; and according as they appear on comparison with him, the sacred writers estimate their characters."

15. *The conduct of David towards the Ammonites, in putting them* under *saws and harrows of iron, &c. on the capture of Rabbah, has been represented as an instance of diabolical and unparalleled cruelty.* (2 Sam. xii. 31.)

The cavils of the objectors, in this as in every other instance, are utterly unfounded: for, in the first place, the expression may signify only that David put them under

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[1] Hales, vol. ii. p. 314. Du Voisin, Autorité des Livres de Moyse, p. 405.

[2] Jahn's History of the Hebrew Commonwealth, vol. i. pp. 111, 112.

[3] See the Rev. Wm. Cleaver's Sermon on the Character of David King of Israel, in four Sermons annexed to Bp. Cleaver's Seven Sermons on Select Subjects, pp. 377—399., and especially Dr. Chandler's Life of David, vol. i. pp. 321—330.

such labours and made slaves of them to do hard and servile work. So we speak of laying people under tribute: it is a common mode of speech in several languages. Secondly, if instead of deducing their objections from translations the objectors had consulted the original passage, they would have seen that there was no ground whatever for their charges. The Hebrew preposition ב (beth), which is used throughout the verse in question, it is well known, signifies *to* as well as *under;* and to put the people to saws, harrows, axes, and the brick-kilns, means no more than to employ them as slaves in the most menial and laborious offices, such as sawing, making iron harrows, hewing wood, and making bricks. This form of expression is an Anglicism as well as a Hebraism; and we still say, to put a person *to* the plough, *to* the anvil, &c. The passage objected to may be thus rendered. *He* (David) *brought forth the people that were therein, and put them to saws, and to harrows of iron,* or to *iron-mines,* for the original word means both, *and to axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln.*[1] This rendering is adopted in the edition of the French version of the Bible corrected by the company of Pastors at Geneva, in 1805.[2]

16. *It has been asserted from* 1 Kings xxii. *that Jehovah kept false prophets as well as true ones.*

The most common attention to the context will show that this assertion is as false as it is malignant. For, in the first place, the four hundred prophets mentioned in that chapter (verse 6.) were pretended prophets whom the wicked king of Israel had in his pay, and who knew how to suit his humour and to flatter his vanity, all agreeing in the same fawning compliances and in the same treacherous counsels which pleased for the present, but ultimately proved fatal. They are emphatically termed by Micaiah (verse 23.) *Ahab's prophets,* notwithstanding they professed to be the Lord's prophets, prophesying in his name. And, secondly, the address of Micaiah to the two confederated kings in verses 19—23. is not a real representation of any thing done in the heavenly world, as if the Almighty were at a loss for expedients or had any hand in the sins of his creatures; but it is a mere parable, and only tells in figurative language what was in the womb of providence, the events which were shortly to take place, and the *permission* [3], on the part of God, for these agents to act. Micaiah did not choose to tell the angry and impious Ahab, that all his prophets were liars; but he represents the whole by this parable, and says the same truths in language equally forcible but less offensive.

17. The Scriptures represent the Almighty as a God of truth and faithfulness; but he is charged by the opposers of divine revelation with being guilty of falsehood, by *inspiring prophets with false messages,* and by *violating his promises.* The grossness of such assertions is sufficiently disgusting, but it is the duty of a Christian advocate fully to meet them, and to expose all their falsehood.

In the first place, With regard to the charge of *inspiring prophets with false messages* (which is founded on 1 Kings xxii. 22, 23.; Jer. iv. 10.; and Ezek. xiv. 9.), we remark, that it is a known idiom of the Hebrew language, to express things in an imperative and active form, which are to be understood only permissively. So where *the devils besought* Christ *that he would suffer them to enter into the herd of swine, he said unto them, Go* (Matt. viii. 31.); he bid not command but permitted them. And so in John xiii. 27., where our Saviour says to Judas, *That thou doest, do quickly,* we are not to understand that he commanded him to betray him, though that

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[1] Orton's Exposition of the Old Testament, vol. iii. p. 195. Chandler's Life of David, vol. ii. p. 227. Hales's Analysis of Chronology, vol. ii. p. 344.

[2] "Il en fit sortir les habitans, et appliqua les uns au travail des scies, des herses de fer, et des haches de fer, et les autres au travail des briques." . . . "He brought forth the inhabitants, and applied [or put] some to the labour of saws, of harrows of iron, and of axes of iron, and others to the labour of bricks." (La Sainte Bible . . . par les Pasteurs et Professeurs de l'Eglise et de l'Académie de Genève, tom. i. p. 258. Genève, 1805.)

[3] That this is the meaning of 1 Kings xxii. 22. is proved in the next remark.

seemed to be expressed in the form. So, likewise, here, where an evil spirit offered himself to be a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophet, and God says, *Go forth and do so:* this only signifies a permission, not a command. And so (Jer. iv. 10.) where the prophet complains that God had greatly deceived the people, *saying they should have peace when the sword reacheth to the soul;* we are to understand this no otherwise, but that God permitted the false prophets to deceive them, prophesying peace to them, as appears by the history. (Ezek. xiv. 19.) *I the* LORD *have deceived that prophet,* that is, permitted him to be deceived, and to deceive the people as a just judgment upon them for their infidelity with respect to his true prophets. This he threatens at the 5th verse, *I will take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols;* because they have chosen to themselves false gods, I will suffer them to be deceived with false prophets; and that this is the meaning, appears by the threatening added, *and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and I will destroy him from the midst of my people:* now God will not punish that of which he is the author.

That text (Jer. xx. 7.) *Thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived,* signifies no more, but that he had mistaken the promise of God to him, who when he gave him his commission, told him he would be with him, by which he understood that no evil should come to him, and *now he was become a derision and the people mocked him;* and in his passion and weakness, he breaks forth into this expression, *Thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived;* whereas it was his own mistake of the meaning of God's promise, which was not, that he should not meet with scorn, and opposition, and persecution, but that they should not prevail against him, as we may see at the latter end of the first chapter.[1]

Secondly, With respect to the assertion that the Almighty violates his promises, it has been objected that God did not give the children of Israel all the land which he promised to Abraham, as will appear by comparing Gen. xviii. 19, 20. with Josh. xiii. 1. &c. and Judg. ii. 20, 21. In Gen xv. 18. God promised *to give Abraham and his seed such a land,* the bounds of which he describes in Josh. xiii. 1. It is there said that *there remained very much land* yet unconquered, of which they had not got possession. And in Judg. ii. 20. it is said, that the people not having performed their part of the covenant, God would suspend the further performance of his promise, and *would not drive out* any more of the nations before them; and it is probable, that the Israelites never were possessed of the promised land in the full latitude and extent of the promise.

ANSWER.—This covenant of God with Abraham was upon consideration of his past faith and obedience, though it seems that the full performance of it did likewise depend upon the future obedience of his posterity. In pursuance of his covenant, notwithstanding all the murmurs and rebellions of that people, God did bring them into the promised land, though they provoked him to destroy them many a time; because he remembered his covenant with Abraham. When they were possessed of it, God gave them a title to the rest, and would have assisted them in the conquest of it, if they had performed the condition required on their part, that is, continued faithful and obedient to him; but they did not, and thereby discharged God from any further performance of his promise; and God, when he had done this, had fully performed the covenant he made with Abraham, so far as concerned his part, as appears by the acknowledgment of Joshua, even in a time when a great part of the land was unconquered (Josh. xxi. 44.), and of Solomon (1 Kings viii. 56.); yea, and had it not been that God had made this covenant, as well upon consideration of Abraham's faith and obedience, as upon condition of the future obedience of his posterity, the rebellions and disobedience of the people in the wilderness had released God wholly from the promise, and he would not have been unfaithful if he had utterly destroyed that people, and made a full end of them, and they had never entered into that land; because a failure of the condition makes the obligation to cease; and that this condition was implied in the covenant with Abraham appears from Deut. vii. 12, 13., xi. 22, 23., and Judg. ii. 20. God gives this reason why he suspended the complete performance of his promise: *The anger of the* LORD *was hot against Israel, and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not*

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[1] Tillotson's Works, vol. vi. p. 506. London, 1820.

hearkened to my voice, I also will not henceforth drive out any of the nations which Joshua left when he died.[1]

18. The destruction of *forty-two little children*, by Elisha, whom they had in sportive playfulness called *a bald head* (it is said), was an act of cruelty and revenge.

It was no such thing. The original word in 2 Kings ii. 23, 24., which in our version is rendered *little children*, also means young persons who are grown up. Thus Isaac was called a *lad*, when he was *twenty-eight* years old; Joseph, when he was *thirty*; and Rehoboam, when he was *forty* years of age. The town of Beth-el was one of the principal seats of Ahab's idolatry; and it is probable that these men came out of that city and insulted the prophet, at the instigation of the priests of Baal, exclaiming — *Ascend, too, thou bald-head; ascend, too, thou bald-head*, in allusion to Elijah's ascension to heaven; of which they had heard, but which they did not believe. Elisha, it is said, *cursed them*; but he did not this from any petulant temper of his own. He *cursed them in the name of the Lord*, that is, he declared in his name and authority the punishment which he would inflict upon them. Thus Elisha acted as a minister of the Supreme Governor of the world; and by his order and in his name he foretold the punishment which was about to be inflicted upon these profligate idolaters. Had this denunciation proceeded from the angry resentment of the prophet only, and not from a divine impulse, such a signal event as the destruction of these profane young men of Beth-el would not have been the immediate consequence of it.

19. It is objected that many passages of the Old Testament ascribe to the Almighty human affections, passions, and actions, even those of the worst kind.

But these objections cease, when such passages are interpreted *figuratively*, as they ought to be, and when all those other passages of the Bible are duly considered, which most evidently convey the sublimest ideas of the Divine Majesty. The Holy Scriptures, it is true, in condescension to our limited capacities, and to the imperfections of human creatures and of human language, represent God as having the body, the passions, and the infirmities of a man. Thus, they make mention of his eyes and ears, his hands and feet, his sleeping and waking; they ascribe to him fierce anger and jealousy, grief and repentance, joy and desire. The simple language of the Hebrews might also be another reason for its abounding with such expressions. But that no man might be so weak or so perverse as to take those expressions according to the letter, and entertain mean and unworthy thoughts of his Maker, the same Scriptures often add to those very descriptions something which manifestly shows us how they are to be understood, and reminds us that if God has a body, the heaven is his throne, and the earth his footstool; if he has hands, they are hands which reach to the ends of the creation; if he has eyes, the darkness to them is no darkness; and from them nothing is hidden; and in other places we are told that he is perfect; that he is blessed or happy; that he is unchangeable; that he is every where present; that he is a spirit; that no man hath seen him or can see him; that he is incomprehensible; and that the most exalted notion which we can possibly frame of him, falls infinitely short of the truth.[2] One or two examples will illustrate the preceding remarks.

Thus, when God is said to *repent*, the expression simply means that He does not execute that which seemed to *us* to have been his purpose; that he is pleased to do otherwise than his threatenings seemed openly to express, on account of some tacit condition implied in them. And this does not derogate either from the truth, or sincerity, or constancy, of God in his word. It does not derogate from his *truth*, because he speaks what he really intends, unless something intervened to prevent the judgment threatened, upon which he resolved when he threatened to take off and stop his judgments. Nor does it derogate from his *sincerity*, for he has told us that his threatenings have such conditions implied in them: — nor from his *con-*

[1] Tillotson's Works, vol. vi. p. 507. See also Waterland's Scripture Vindicated, on Ezek. xiv. 9. (Works, vol. vi. pp. 257—264.)
[2] Jortin's Sermons, vol. i. p. 287.

stancy and immutability, because God does not change his counsel and purpose, but takes off the sentence, which he had passed with reserved conditions.

20. It has also been objected, that the book of Ecclesiastes contains some passages which savour of irreligion, and others which savour of immorality.

But the passages, thus excepted against, are either innocent when rightly interpreted; or else they express, — *not* the sentiments of Solomon, but the *false opinions* of others, whom he personates in order to confute them; — or, however, not his deliberate sentiments, but such hasty and wrong notions, as during the course of his inquiry after happiness arose successively in his mind, and were on mature consideration rejected by him, that he might fix at last on the true basis, — the *conclusion of the whole matter;* which is to *fear God and keep his commandments; for God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* (Eccl. xii. 13, 14.)

21. It has likewise been objected that the Song of Solomon, and the sixteenth and twenty-third chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy, contain passages offensive to common decency.

But this objection will fall to the ground by interpreting those parts allegorically, as almost all the commentators, from the earliest times, have unanimously done: and, likewise, by considering that the simplicity of the eastern nations made these phrases less offensive to them than they appear to us; as, on the other hand, many things which are perfectly correct in our view, would appear far different in eastern climates. With respect to the Song of Solomon, in particular, it is to be remarked, 1. That most of the forms of speech, against which exceptions have been made, are mistranslations, and do not exist in the original; — and, 2. Admitting the correctness of these remarks, it may also be shown, that this book abounds with beautiful poetic images. There is, therefore, no just exception to supposing it allegorical, provided the allegory be not extravagant and inconsistent.

22. It has been asserted, that the imprecations pronounced by the prophets, particularly in many passages of the Psalms, show a spirit of malice inconsistent with humanity, and highly vicious.

"It is an improper vindication of these" [imprecations], "either to allow that malice was *consistent* with the spirit of the Old Testament, though not of the New; or, to say that the prophets pronounced them against men, not as their own enemies, but as the enemies of God. But some of them appear harsh only by the strong figurative style in which they are expressed, and, when taken out of this, appear very allowable wishes. All of them may be considered not as prayers, but simple predictions, the imperative being put for the future" [as in Psal. xxviii. 4, 5.] "(which is a common Hebrew idiom), and shown to be so put by the future being used in other parts of the prediction; and this idiom is more natural in prediction than in other kinds of composition, because it is the immediate result of combining idioms common in the prophetical style; for, as the prophets are often commanded to do a thing, when it is only meant that they should foretell it[1]; so they often do foretell a thing by commanding it to be done[2], and they often express their predictions in an address to God[3]; the union of which two idioms gives them the appearance of imprecations."[4]

Of all those tremendous imprecations which appear in our common English version of Deut. xxvii. 15—26., there is not one authorised by the original. The

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[1] See examples of this mode of speech in Isa. vi. 10. and Jer. i. 10.

[2] Isa. xlvii. 1. "Come down" [that is, thou shalt come down], "and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon;" [thou shalt] "sit on the ground."

[3] Isa. ix. 3. "Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased their joy: they joy" [that is, they shall joy] "before thee, according to the joy in harvest."

[4] Gerard's Institutes of Biblical Criticism, pp. 447, 448.

Hebrew texts express no kind of *wish*, but are only so many denunciations of the displeasure of God against those who either were or should be guilty of the sins therein mentioned, and of the judgments which they must expect to be inflicted upon them, unless prevented by a timely and sincere repentance. And agreeably to this view, the sacred text should have been rendered "cursed they," or, "cursed *are* they," and not "cursed *be* they," in the sense of *Let them be* cursed; the word *be*, though inserted in our translation, having nothing answerable to it in the Hebrew.

The same idiom, which appears in the prophetic writings, is also to be found in 1 Cor. xvi. 22. and 2 Tim. iv. 14.

The former passage runs thus:—*If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be anathema maranatha.* From 1 Cor. xii. 3. we find that the Jews, who pretended to be under the Spirit and teaching of God, called Jesus Christ ἀνάθεμα or *accursed*, that is, a person devoted to destruction. In 1 Cor. xvi. 22. Saint Paul retorts the whole upon themselves, and says, *If any man love not the Lord Jesus let* HIM *be* (that is, *he will* be) *accursed; the Lord will come.* This is not said in the way of imprecation, but as a *prediction* of what would certainly come upon the Jews if they did not repent; and of what *actually came* upon them, because they did not repent, but continued to *hate* and *execrate* the Saviour of the world, as well as a prediction of what still lies upon them because they continue to *hate* and *execrate* the Redeemer.

In 2 Tim. iv. 14. we read, *Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works;* which has the appearance of an imprecation. But instead of ἀποδώη *may* the Lord *reward*, ἀποδώσει *will reward* is the reading of the Codices Alexandrinus and Ephremi (which are of the best authority), the Codices Claromontanus, San Germanensis, Augiensis, also of those numbered by Griesbach 6. 17. 31. 37. 67**. 71. 73. 80. and of the MS. by Matthæi noted with the letter f.;—of the Coptic, Armenian, and Vulgate versions—and of Chrysostom, Theodoret, Eulogius as cited by Photius, Johannes Damascenus, Oecumenius, Augustine, and others among the fathers of the Christian church. The reading of ἀποδώσει makes the sentence declaratory,—*The Lord* WILL REWARD *him according to his works;* and as it is supported by such satisfactory evidence, Griesbach has inserted it in his inner margin, as being nearly equal, if not preferable, to the common reading.[1] An additional proof that this is the preferable lection is furnished by the fact, that it is in unison with the spirit and temper of the intrepid Apostle, Saint Paul; who, in the sixteenth verse, when speaking of his being deserted by every one, when (during his second imprisonment at Rome) he was first summoned to vindicate himself before the sanguinary emperor Nero, says, *Let it not be placed to their charge*, that is, Let them not have to reckon for it with the Supreme Judge, at the great day.

23. The preceding examples, with two exceptions, have been taken from the Old Testament. So pure, indeed, is the morality of the New Testament, that the advocates of infidelity can find no other fault with it, than this,—that it carries the principle of *forbearance* too far, because, among other things, it inculcates the love of our enemies. Notwithstanding this involuntary testimony to its inimitable excellence, two passages have been singled out, as inculcating immorality, viz. Luke xvi. 8. and 1 Cor. ix. 5.

(1.) In Luke xv. 8. we read that *The lord commended the unjust steward* (who in the parable had been represented as having defrauded his master), *because he had done wisely;* and hence Jesus Christ has been unjustly charged with countenancing dishonesty. The whole of the context, however, shows, that it was the *master* or *lord of the steward*, and NOT Christ, who is represented as commending his conduct, and it is in consequence of his master's so commending him that Jesus made the reflection, that *the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.* The parable in question is to be interpreted *solely* in reference to the prin-

[1] Scholz, Lachmann, and Tischendorf have inserted ἀποδώσει as the proper reading of the text in their editions of the Greek Testament.

cipal idea contained in it; and that idea is, from the conduct of a worldly minded man, to enforce upon the followers of Jesus Christ the necessity of their being at least as assiduous in pursuing the business of the next world,—the salvation of their souls, — as worldly minded men are in *their* management of the affairs of this world.

(2.) The interrogatory (1 Cor. ix. 5.) has been distorted into a charge of adultery against the apostle Paul. It would be a sufficient reply to this falsehood, to state that the whole of his conduct and sentiments completely disproves it. The purest benevolence, the severest reproofs of all sin, and the most exemplary discharge of all the civil, social, and relative duties pervade all his justly admired epistles. Let us, however, briefly consider this passage. It is sufficiently evident from the context, that at Corinth there were false teachers of Christianity, who questioned Paul's apostleship; and that he was obliged to conduct himself in the most circumspect manner, in order that they might not find any occasion against him. Having vindicated his apostolic character and mission, and proved his right to have the necessaries of life supplied to him, if he had demanded them of those among whom he had laboured gratuitously, he says, — *Have we not power (authority* or *right) to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord and Cephas?* What is there in this passage which can be construed into a sufficient proof of adultery in an English court of law? — When the apostle speaks of his right to take with him a sister, a wife, he means, first, that he and all other apostles, and, consequently, all ministers of the Gospel, had a RIGHT to marry; for it appears that James and Jude, who were *the brethren* or kinsmen *of the Lord*, were married; and we have infallible evidence that Peter (surnamed Cephas) was a married man, not only from this verse, but also from Matt. viii. 14. where his *mother-in-law* is mentioned as being cured by Jesus Christ of a fever. And, secondly, we find that their wives were persons of the same faith, for less can never be implied in the word *sister*. It is further worthy of notice that Clement of Alexandria has particularly remarked that the apostles carried their *wives* about with them, "not as wives but as SISTERS, that they might minister to those who were mistresses of families, that so the doctrine of the Lord might, *without reprehension or evil suspicion*, enter the apartments of the women."[1]

[1] Clementis Alexandrini Stromata, lib. iii. c. 6. (Op. tom. i. pp. 535, 536. Oxon, 1715.) Clement was one of the most learned Greek Christian writers in the close of the second century. His Stromata were written A.D. 193.

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